

COUNTRY LIFE

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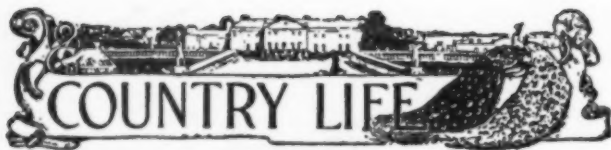
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LALLIE CHARLES.

VISCOUNTESS CHELSEA.

39a, Curzon Street, Mayfair.



The Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits.

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STOCK-OWNERS AND FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE

NEVER since the days of the rinderpest has there been so grave an announcement made by a Minister of Agriculture as that which came from Mr. Runciman the other night. Within recent times there have been many sporadic outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease; but the herds of the country have not been widely and seriously threatened. In every case the disease was confined to a comparatively narrow district, from which it could be stamped out by slaughter. Thus the Board of Agriculture emerged victorious from what may be called these outpost actions with the malady. All the same, it was recognised by thoughtful observers that foot-and-mouth disease had but retired and was liable at any moment to invade the whole country. It is difficult to see how it can be otherwise, as long as Continental nations are so lax as to view the appearance of the disease in hundreds

of places with as little anxiety as was felt in this country when the hoofs of cattle were collected in huge baskets after a sale or a show. It is only within very recent times that a mastery over it has been obtained; recent events show that the mastery is doubtful. It would appear that the outbreak first occurred on a farm near Swords, in County Dublin. How it got there nobody yet knows. It may have been carried by fodder or by some other familiar means. At any rate, there it was. Ireland has been wonderfully free for nearly a generation, and it is very unfortunate for her that this outbreak should have occurred. The closing of the English ports to Irish cattle must cause a serious loss to the Irish graziers, who from January 1st to June 22nd of the present year sent 309,476 cattle, 222,106 sheep and 182,832 pigs to this country; but we hope there will be no endorsement of the language used about this by Mr. William O'Brien, who in the House of Commons tried to make out that the closing of the ports was an extravagant measure of precaution, and that it would have been sufficient to isolate the district in which the outbreak occurred. Farmers and all who own livestock will do well to set aside any irritation generated by private loss and support with all their heart the action of the Board of Agriculture. In the opinion of those best qualified to judge, the action taken by Mr. Runciman is the only one by which we can hope for an early extirpation of the disease. Any trifling with it or any half measures would be almost certain to lead to an outbreak of still greater dimensions. Of course, it is easy to say this; but we do so with the greatest sympathy for those who suffer. Before Mr. Runciman issued the order for cattle, pigs and sheep to be sent back from Doncaster, one of the most distinguished and successful of pedigree stock-breeders in this country told us that he had stopped his cattle from going to the show, although he did not think there was much harm in the case of the sheep. Undoubtedly, it would have been very dangerous, considering the occurrence of cases at the neighbouring town of Wakefield, to allow the concentration of livestock at Doncaster.

It seems that a dealer who purchased animals from the infected area in Ireland and in Liverpool sold them to go to various parts of the country. There were some fifty of these animals, and each must have carried infection into a new district. The Board acted very promptly, and sent out no fewer than two hundred officials to trace the destination of each beast; but it was impossible that they could stop the spread of contagion. It was a very strong step on Mr. Runciman's part to prohibit the sending of cattle to the Royal Show; but it is a step that breeders will generally support. They have obtained a great deal of new light in regard to the treatment of contagious diseases during the last ten or fifteen years, and though here and there one may grumble at the action of the Government as being tyrannical and inconvenient, the vast majority will heartily support it. Foot-and-mouth disease has never been known to start spontaneously, but is, as far as human experience goes, invariably carried by infection. Therefore, the only effective means of dealing with an outbreak is by slaughter and isolation. Nevertheless, the Board should not be content with this. It is well enough to adopt prompt and practical measures to reduce an outbreak; but also there should be the most thorough and careful examination into the nature of the disease. The Development Fund has been maid of all work—at any rate, everybody with a colourable excuse has applied for help from it; but it could not possibly be used to better purpose than in biological research.

We are not unmindful of the fact that scientific investigation is being, or about to be, carried out on a large scale in India; but in this country, here at home where the disease is rampant, a parallel enquiry could easily be made. Of what use are our great educational centres if work like this is not to be entrusted to them? However, that is not the immediate issue to be considered. What is wanted just now is that all who have capital at stake in regard to farm animals should give their heartiest and most loyal co-operation to the Board of Agriculture. They should help them, especially by directing attention to any case among their herds which excites suspicion; they can supply the officials with all the information in their power. Losses must no doubt be incurred. Livestock exhibitors at the Royal Show have had an unfortunate experience.

Our Portrait Illustration.

THE frontispiece this week is a portrait of Viscountess Chelsea, who is the only daughter of Mr. George Coxon of Craigleith, Cheltenham, and married Viscount Chelsea in July of last year.

. It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens, or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.

COUNTRY



• NOTES •

THIS week London has been honoured by the visit of a number of distinguished Canadian statesmen, including Mr. Borden, the Prime Minister; Mr. Hazen, Minister of Marine; the Minister of Inland Revenue; the Postmaster-General; Mr. George Foster, Minister of Trade and Commerce; and Sir Joseph Pope, Permanent Under-Secretary of State. It is no trivial occasion that brings them together in London at the present moment. Mr. Foster, at the Dominion Day dinner, held under the presidency of the venerable Lord Strathcona, went to the very heart of the matter. The case can be put very simply. This country is confronted with the task of meeting the huge ship-building programme of Germany. The right of that nation to create a navy is not disputed; but it is obvious that an Empire whose component parts lie scattered over the whole world, and whose commerce and even food depend upon freedom on the high seas, cannot afford to let any other country equal her in naval strength. The present policy is to strengthen our power in the North Sea, and for that reason the dubious resolution has been come to that the care of the Mediterranean may be left to another Power. What is Canada going to do at this crisis in Imperial history? That is the question which Mr. Borden will probably determine before he leaves the capital.

Mr. Foster's position is perfectly clear and satisfactory. He laid it down as a principle that "we hope always to reside under the shadow of the grand old flag." He pointed out that Canada had been "cradled in safety" and her infancy protected. She had not worked, like the Israelites of old, with a sword in one hand and a trowel in the other; but had rested in the security given her by the British Army and the British Navy. He went on to make the significant declaration, "to these (the Army and Navy) little in the way of direct contribution has yet been made. It is impossible, I believe, that eight millions of people can long live in the consciousness of receiving great benefit and returning little." The obvious meaning of this is that in the immediate future Canada will lend a hand to the strengthening of the Navy. As Sir George Reid pointed out, in this twelve year old Canada is following the example of forty-five year old Australia. In Australia they are entering all the boys into military service, building battleships and cruisers and submarines and, in a word, preparing for anything that may befall.

Mr. Foster gave a still better sample of his mettle in his speech at the Constitutional Club. It was said by many of the experienced politicians there present that greater eloquence was never heard within those walls that have listened to Lord Randolph Churchill, to Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, to Mr. Arthur Balfour and to nearly all the other great speakers of the Conservative Party. Mr. Foster achieved the very fine feat of producing a most eloquent speech on a theme that looks at a first glance so unpromising as commerce. But the combined ardour and imagination with which he attacked it, the logic with which he showed how beneficial it is to an empire or a country if it can confine within its boundaries two productions, that of the raw material and the finished article, were almost apostolic. He has a fine enthusiasm, and it is backed by the more solid attributes of logic and reason. Probably enough armchair critics may show flaws in his arguments, but it was no

easy thing to discover them while the listener was under the spell of the eloquence that revealed a great personality.

Most of us regard it as ill news that Mr. Lloyd George is going to awaken once more the slumbering fire of agrarian agitation. English land and its owners have had a troubled time for the last thirty years and more. During the long depression owners were impoverished and tenants fled the soil, but the voice of the agitator was stilled. Now at the first blink of returning prosperity it is hard that a Chancellor of the Exchequer should take the lead in attacking our greatest industry. His anger is directed mainly against the owners of land. It would be interesting to put him in the witness-box and ask what are the specific offences. The assertion that the rural population is fettered by the shackles of feudalism is only a rhetorical phrase. What does it mean? Mr. Lloyd George is a responsible statesman who ought not to use such a phrase unless behind it there are explicit charges. From the context it would appear that he thinks the owner grasps an extortionate share of the profits. Unless this is so, the deliverance had no meaning. But it is a delusion. The return for capital invested in agricultural land is very small when compared with that from any commercial investment. On many estates, great and small, the whole of the revenue goes in upkeep. Low rents are the rule and not the exception.

THE BALLROOM.

See, the door opens!

Ah, the blaze of rose
And blue, and streaming lights . . . how strange a scene
My dazzled eyes forget the stars they've seen,
And the interastral space, and lunar snows.

Here hang the masks and veils. The Steward knows
What fancy fits us, whether Muse or Queen
Or simple Susan in her coat of green;
Take what he gives; 'tis but a dance of shows.

Yet, sometimes, if I watch Titania's ass
With long ears nodding in the looking-glass,
I wonder: is it I? and pause and dream . . .
But hark! Death calls.

I shut the ballroom door
Behind me, and I quit the things that seem,
To live the eternal life I lived before.

MARY DUCLAUX.

Nobody is likely to say at the present moment that the tenant-farmer has a grievance of this kind against his landlord. He does not belong to a class which is backward in expressing opinion, and, if such complaints have been made, it would be very advantageous to have a reference to them. We may take it that there is nothing of the kind. Landlord and tenant never were on better terms than they are at the present moment. The issue is therefore narrowed to one between the labourer and the farmer. Upon this question, no doubt, there is room for a difference of opinion. As far as money is concerned, the farm-labourer comes out badly in comparison with some other workers. Nevertheless, he is most probably the most comfortable, as he is certainly the healthiest, of all those who are in the ranks of the unskilled. The proposal to fix a minimum wage for him is wild and impracticable. The price of labour, like the price of anything else, must be settled by economic conditions, and though from time to time efforts have been made to fix it arbitrarily, they have invariably failed. Those who advocate anything of the kind are retrogressive. They are returning to mediævalism in one of its worst forms.

At the Investiture held at Buckingham Palace on July 1st, a most interesting feature was the bestowal of medals on those who had shown exceptional gallantry at moments of danger arising in ordinary life. Among them was a Scout-master who had assisted in rescuing boys in danger of drowning while bathing; a boatswain, a first mate, a boatman, an ordinary seaman and several coastguards received distinction for heroism shown at sea or in wrecks. One man honoured was a farm-labourer of sixty-four who, on a stormy December day in 1911, had stripped himself of his clothing, clambered along the rocks and was enabled to tell the crew of a steam-trawler, which had been stranded near Bempton Cliffs, that the lifeboat was coming round from Flamborough, and thus saved them from making

a desperate attempt to save themselves. He did all this with the surf dashing on the rocks. Several men received medals for gallantry exhibited at fires and, as might be expected, those who work in mines produced several examples of bravery shown in pursuit of that dangerous occupation. It is good to know that recognition of brave deeds is no longer confined to those who fight by land or sea, but that the lowliest individual who courageously does his best at a moment of peril has his name also inscribed on the shield of fame.

Those journalists who are trying to get up a panic about the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease by saying that it will lead to a famine in meat are guilty of exaggeration. No doubt the temporary closing of the markets may be a cause of inconvenience; but there is nothing to prevent beasts being sold and slaughtered where they stand, so that, if there was any very considerable rise in prices, an effectual means of meeting it would be at hand. Another point is that the remedy for foot-and-mouth disease is sharp and sure. In a word, it is the death of the animal; and if slaughter is promptly carried out, quarantine need not last so long as to influence prices for any considerable length of time. The appearance of the disease certainly will not cheapen the price of meat, it may even cause it to rise, but there is no danger at present of famine prices being reached.

In another column will be found an account of the awarding of prizes to the Public Schools teams which won the cups offered by *COUNTRY LIFE* early in the year. In its particulars are given of the presentations. Our thanks are due to Lord Methuen and General Congreve for the trouble they took in the matter. Lord Methuen put himself to considerable inconvenience for a purpose which he estimated as of national importance. It may be claimed for the competition that it was of no ordinary kind. The object in holding it was to encourage Public Schools in their miniature practice to keep up to the highest level of modern army shooting. Never before, as far as we know, have they competed with landscape targets, and it is obvious that this initiation must greatly help them to a use of the rifle in the practical manner made necessary by warfare. It had the subsidiary merits of inculcating readiness and promptitude as well as accuracy. The Public Schools deserve the very high praise bestowed on their shooting by the great military authorities who have interested themselves in this competition.

Lord Rosebery delivered a characteristic eulogy of the medical profession in a speech given at the prize day of the London Hospital Medical College. It was full of humorous touches, but had the underlying earnestness that turns chaff into eloquence. He pleasantly recalled the apothecary of our childhood—that apothecary who was so often sent for in the pages of Jane Austen; but it was only to show the enormous progress made by medicine during the last half century. Perhaps he went to an unfair extreme when he lumped the great conquerors of history, Cæsar and Charlemagne, Napoleon and Wellington, as “banes and injuries to the generations in which they lived”; but it was only to exalt the name of Lister. It certainly would not be possible to exaggerate the debt humanity owes to the discoverer of the antiseptic treatment; but at the same time it is to the soldier we are indebted for the enfranchisement of the race, the opening of the path to progress, and the liberty to advance. Great Britain to-day would not be the hive of industry it is but for the great soldiers and sailors of the past who prevented it time and again from becoming a mere adjunct of one of the Continental Powers. Lord Rosebery is unlikely to wish himself to be taken too seriously. His was the orator's artifice of abasing one class of men in order that the exaltation of the other might be more illustrious and conspicuous.

At Sotheby's, which may be likened to a little eddy to which the most curious documents are in the habit of finding their way, a Cromwellian letter has turned up delightfully full of Old Noll's shrewd common-sense and peculiarities. It was written at the end of January, 1643, when he was raising a body of Cavalry to resist the advance of Lord Capel. The directions about “what captaines of horse you chuse, what men bee mounted” show the soldier as well as the man of the world. “A few honest men are better than numbers” is one of his maxims. Another is “If you bee able, to foyle a force att the first cominge of itt, you will have reputation.” But the best passage is his blunt “I had rather have a plaine russett coated captain that knowes what hee fights for, and loves what hee

knowes, than that wch you call a gentleman and is nothing else.” A letter like this does more to explain Cromwell than pages of disquisition.

Last week's Croquet Championship Meeting at Roehampton proved a triumph for Mr. C. L. O'Callaghan. This famous Irishman has stood out by himself at the game during the last few years. Not even in 1910, when he achieved the unique distinction of winning the triple honours of the Croquet Championship, the Champion Cup and the Gentlemen's Gold Medal, was he seen in a better light than last week. The marvellous character of his play in securing the championship and the mixed doubles championship as well—with Mrs. Gordon Lockett as partner—is well shown by the statement that he only made five mistakes in a series of twenty-one games. Mr. O'Callaghan now possesses an unprecedented championship record. Out of seven attempts, he has contested five finals (twice successfully), and on the two remaining occasions his defeat has been brought about by the player to whom the ultimate honours have fallen. Generally regarded at the outset as being of an exceptionally open nature, the claims of Miss E. D. B. Simeon—possibly the most improved lady exponent of last season—in the Ladies' Championship were comparatively ignored on the grounds of her inexperience. That she was capable of winning it at the expense of such a practised hand as Miss E. M. Bramwell in the final round, affords striking testimony of Miss Simeon's confident play at the crucial stage of a contest which demands so much coolness and nerve.

ON A STILE *PRO TEM.*

While now the sun disperses
Obtrusive clouds that hid his face awhile,
I'm writing (more or less) upon a stile
These verses.

Prone from a recent mowing,
In heavy swathes the grass lies limp and wet,
And when it will be dry there is, as yet,
No knowing.

For brief, perhaps, as pleasant,
And stubbornly reluctant to recur
May be the sunshine that avails to stir
Yon peasant.

He hurries not, however;
But rake or pitchfork handled by-and-by
Will possibly assist him to a high
Endeavour.

But as for me—Great Cæsar!
Two bumble-bees! I'll sprint like anything,
Reminded now that time is on the wing—
As these are! HUGH DIPTHONG.

“Those of us that get a half crop of hay this year will be the lucky ones in the South.” This gloomy prognostication was given a little while back by a considerable stock-raiser in the South of England—one to whom the hay crop made a serious difference—and it appears to be in process of exact realisation. No doubt in the Midlands, where there has been much more rain, there will not be the same shortage; but in the South some of the poorer fields do not look as if they would pay for the labour of cutting and making. It is mainly the drought of April from which they are suffering; but it is also to be remembered, and to be reckoned as some sort of set-off against the short crop now, that there was an unusually fine growth of pasture in the early spring, after the mild winter, and presumably it is true of grass, as of cake, that we cannot eat it and have it too.

It is very rightly that some of the county councils, and in particular the council for Surrey county, are bestirring themselves to seek a way for the diminution of fires on heaths and similar places where a great conflagration may spread from a small spark. Apart from fires kindled with malicious intent, for which the punishment should be drastic in proportion to the difficulty of catching the offender, there is a peculiar danger, where roads traverse country of this nature, from the ever-increasing number of the traction-engines and similar machines which ply along the roads emitting glowing sparks which the wind carries for many yards. Where the county councils

have referred the matter to the district councils the latter have seemed disposed to refer it back again to the larger body, as an affair for them to deal with; but, after all, it is not quite clear whether the only real remedy is not to be found by going to a higher court still and demanding an Act of Parliament which shall require traction-engines and the like to be fitted with far more effective spark-catching or spark-preventive apparatus than they carry now.

As the present summer advances, several signs in the gardens indicate that the abnormal heat of last summer has had an influence of which the effect will be visible for more than one year to come. We had always expected that it would result in unusual enrichment or unusual impoverishment, as the case might be, of different floral growths in the summer following. What surprises us now is to see much evidence that the effect of that one summer will not be exhausted for several years. We see it in most agreeable form in the splendid wood shoots which the roses are now making. If we get a good sun to ripen the wood, it looks as if we ought to have better rose gardens next season than have ever been seen before. This is, almost beyond a doubt, due to the kindly influence of the heat of last year, and even now the roses are more splendid than usual. As an evidence of impoverishment, we may take the rhododendrons, which have suffered so badly in some gardens

that, in the opinion of one of the most successful growers and hybridisers of the finest kinds, it will be two or three years before they can recover from last summer's drought and scorching.

It is only reasonable that the application of the turbine principle of engine construction for the driving of steam-yachts, should be becoming increasingly popular. A yacht lately built for Mr. Rouss of New York by Messrs. Yarrow and Co., and fitted with a turbine engine, is announced to have developed the remarkable speed, on her trial trip, of over thirty-two knots. To those who have had no experience of turbine-driven small vessels, the first consideration likely to occur is that the vibration must be tremendous in a yacht of two hundred and five feet, which is the length of Mr. Rouss' new boat, sent through the water at such a pace. As a matter of fact, however, the turbine principle appears to reduce the vibration in a remarkable degree. The present writer was on board a nine hundred-ton turbine-driven yacht when two naval officers who had never seen this kind of engine in action paid her a visit. She was at her moorings when they came on board, and on the owner's orders her engines were set going, and she was put under way with such a perfect absence of vibration that it was not till they looked through the portholes that the officers would believe the yacht was moving.

GARDEN ROSES.

BY GERTRUDE JEKYLL.

SOME photographs of roses by Mr. Seymour, of quite unusual quality, combining the true artist's appreciation of individual form and also of choice and arrangement of subject with rare technical excellence, remind us of the value in our gardens of some of the types of beautiful Roses that the pictures represent. One of the best proofs of the growth of good judgment in modern gardening is the renewed and always growing appreciation of what are known as garden roses. For, though the hosts of what may well come within the classification of show roses are glorious and beautiful things, yet for the giving of true happiness in the garden we turn to the more homely kinds, the greater number of which are only half-double, while some are quite single. We admire the cold, correct beauty of Frau Karl Druschki, but we pass on and linger in a spirit of rapturous thankfulness by the single Una and by some of

the half-doubles that show the golden stamens, so pure and tender in colour when the flower is newly unfolded. Growers and raisers are responding to the increasing demand for this

class of rose and, year by year, new beauties may be seen at shows and, still better, in the nurseries, where the habit and general value of the plant can be more accurately perceived than when cut blooms or potted plants only are shown; for it is mainly this matter of "habit" that determines the particular use for which the plant is best fitted. It is extremely various, for the species from which the well-known plants are derived come from many parts of the world that present different conditions and aspects of natural habitat. Hence we have roses that will climb to a great height, others that form close bushes barely a foot high, roses for pillars, arches and arbours, roses for walls, roses for beds and for every possible kind of garden use.

Some of the most useful in ordinary gardening are those



E. Seymour.

A MODERN TYPE.

Copyright.



E. Seymour.

REINE BLANCHE.

Copyright.

that form true bushes. Great as is the number of the newer kinds, there are but few of this convenient habit. To find them we have to go back to the old kinds beloved of our great-grandmothers, and still among the most treasured of our garden occupants. They comprise the whole range of Scotch briars, white, pink, rose-red and yellow, with the native Burnet Rose, white tinged with citron; the parent of them all. The natural bushy habit is increased by the growth of suckers. These and the other old garden roses are, of course, on their own roots, so that when suckers appear they are welcomed as wholesome

increase instead of being dreaded and detested as "robbers" to be rooted out, as in the case of grafted plants. Of the other old bush roses there are these central types: Damask, Provence, Gallica, Alba and China. Damask gives us low-growing bushes with bright red, half-double flowers and a mass of yellow stamens in the centre. Besides the type the most noteworthy are the striped variety, Rosa Mundi, the one usually called York and Lancaster, though this name, by earlier ascription, belongs to another, less good, variety; and the remarkably beautiful Reine Blanche, creamy white, with red buds which give an



E. Seymour.

A DOUBLE CHINA ROSE.

Copyright.

irregular red edging to the expanded flower. Provence (*centifolia*) is the old pink Cabbage Rose, the sweetest of scent, and, with its crested variety, the Moss Rose, perhaps the most endearing, both from its old association with our English gardens and from its own singular charm, of all our garden flowers. Of the Gallicas the most useful is the Double Blush, forming a large bush loaded with its pretty bloom towards the end of June. Rosa alba is not considered a true species. It is the old white rose of cottage gardens, single or half-double. In the variety Maiden's Blush the name describes the colour; a little deeper in colour is the lovely Celeste. The foliage of the Albas is handsome and peculiar; the leaves broad and flat and of an unusual bluish colour, with strongly serrated edges. The only fault of these delightful old roses is that their bloom is at one season only, and in this the more recent hybrid roses, especially the hybrid teas, have a great advantage, for they are in flower more or less throughout the late summer and autumn.

Of old bush roses of longer duration there is the pink China, too well known to need description, a rose for every garden, and specially enjoyable when planted with bushes of lavender and rosemary, the grey of their foliage being an admirable accompaniment to the charming clear pink bloom. One more of the old bush roses should not be forgotten, namely, Rosa lucida. It is of American origin, a very hardy thing, thriving in any unpromising place, where its neat, polished leaves and single pink bloom, followed by a wealth of red fruit and bright leaf-colouring in autumn, are always welcome. It does best in slight shade. The double kind, the old Rose d'Amour, is a lovely thing that should be more generally grown.

HOLLAND HOUSE SHOW

THE summer show of the Royal Horticultural Society has become increasingly popular since its inception some eight years ago, and the exhibition held in the beautiful and spacious grounds at Holland Park on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday last was quite equal, if not superior, to those held in previous years. Following within six weeks of the great International Show at Chelsea, it was gratifying to note that public interest in London flower shows has not abated, for although it rained incessantly on the afternoon of the first day, yet the attendance was good, and it was only with difficulty that one could get a glimpse of some of the chief exhibits. The outstanding feature of the exhibition was unquestionably seen in the hardy plants and alpine, while the various designs of rock and water gardens, showing different styles of gardening, were the centres of interest. An Old English terrace and wall garden adapted to modern times was, of its kind, both ideal and convincing, and other delightfully conceived and well-arranged rock gardens were all that could be desired. Japanese irises were everywhere used with telling effect as water-side plants, and nymphæas, in exquisite forms were never shown to greater advantage. Among the herbaceous plants the tall spikes of the noble *eremuri* were

very conspicuous, while phloxes and Canterbury bells in a variety of hues were shown magnificently. Nor must we overlook the effective displays of delphiniums in shades of blue. Roses were unmistakably one of the chief features, and if there is one variety more than another that deserves special mention it is Rayon d'Or, a nicely-shaped rose, cadmium yellow in colour, with fine bronzy foliage. The Lyon rose and Juliet were other varieties well to the fore, and well-coloured blooms of Marquise de Sinety seemed to be present in all of the many groups of roses. Weeping standard roses are now very popular, and, in consequence, were well represented. The new method of showing cut roses in baskets is a great advance over the formal boxes still used by some exhibitors.

Quality and effect were represented in the wonderful displays of sweet peas staged on this occasion, proving—if such



E. Seymour.

A BEAUTIFUL SEMI-DOUBLE ROSE.

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proof were necessary—the immense popularity of the queen of annual flowers.

Very tempting indeed were the collections of peaches, nectarines, plums and gages, all shown as pot trees heavily laden with their luscious fruits. Gooseberries and red currants were likewise heavily cropped. The admirable manner in which the bushes and trees had been trained as cordons for walls and as standards reflects the greatest credit upon the skill of the fruit-growers in this country.

More pleasant surroundings for a London flower show it would be impossible to find, and the Royal Horticultural Society are to be congratulated upon their arrangement, which promises to afford Holland Park as a permanent site for the summer show for some years to come.

"COUNTRY LIFE" RIFLE-SHOOTING TROPHIES.



FIELD-MARSHAL LORD METHUEN AT RADLEY—THE MARCH PAST.

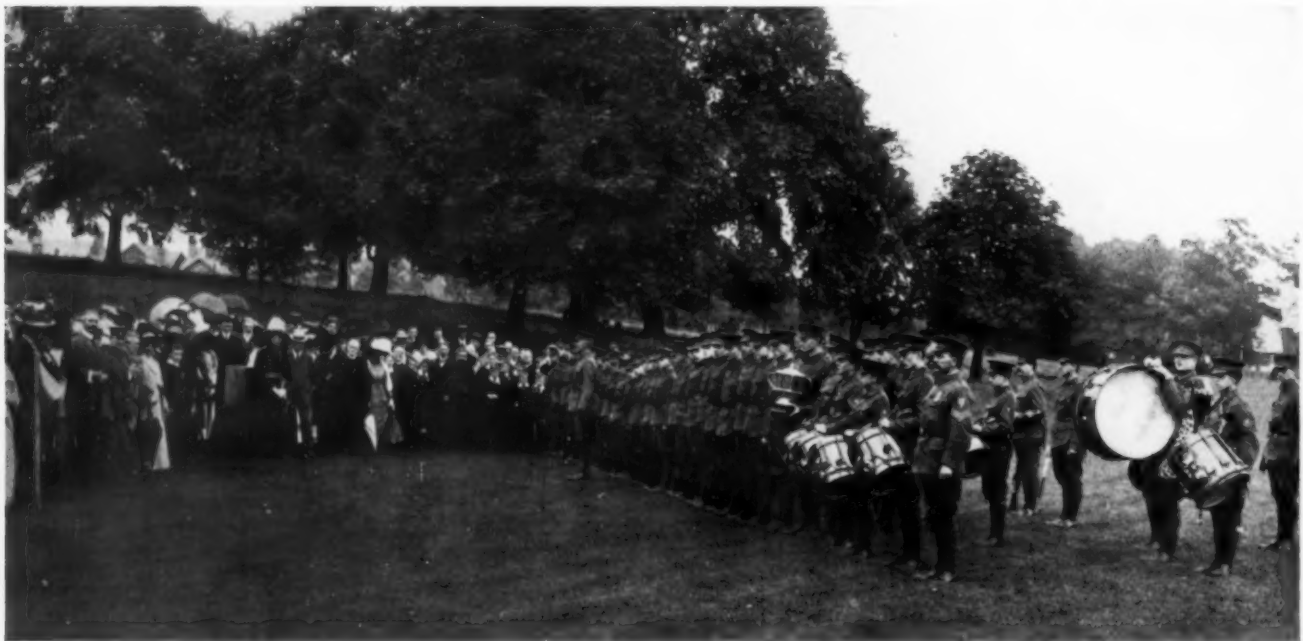
SATURDAY last, being the occasion of the annual commemoration, Field-Marshal Lord Methuen journeyed to Radley College for the purpose of presenting the COUNTRY LIFE Public Schools O.T.C. Trophy (for schools having two or more companies of Infantry) to the Radley contingent, full particulars of which appeared in our issue of May 25th. Lord Methuen, who was attended by Major A. J. B. Percival, D.S.O., of the Officers' Training Corps Department of the War Office, and Captain C. de Putron of the Hythe School of Musketry (who was largely responsible for the conditions of the competitions) inspected the corps, which was under the command of Captain

A. W. Davies. In addressing the contingent Lord Methuen remarked that in the country from which he had just come, South Africa, they had more of the right material at hand for a citizen army than they had among the lads in England. In South Africa many were obliged from their outdoor life to ride a horse and to make use of a rifle. The cadets were able to hold their own with any of the line regiments there. No one appreciated games more than he did, and he was the very last to say one word against them; but he thought they ought all to realise the fact that, however valuable sports and games might be, there was one thing which came above everything else, and that was their duty to their country.



PRESENTING THE TROPHY.

Major A. J. B. Percival. The Warden. Captain C. de Putron. Lord Methuen.



BRIGADIER-GENERAL CONGREVE, V.C., ADDRESSING THE TRENT COLLEGE CONTINGENT.

He urged that it was the duty of every young man to learn the use of the rifle. They might never be called upon to fight, but they must recollect this, that if they got into a tight corner they not only would not get out of it, but would stand a remarkably good chance of leaving their bones in that tight corner unless they were able to let the enemy clearly understand that the rifle they carried was one he had to look out for. This country was not one that wished to give cause of trouble to any other, but it was a country which had to let others know that its citizens could take care of themselves. "I do not want to teach you, boys," said Lord Methuen, "how to kill people, but I want you to make people afraid of trying to kill you." As a military man he respected to the utmost degree the time and trouble taken by Lord Roberts in warning the country as to what might happen if they did not prepare themselves. If they did not take the advice of a man like that, all he could say was that he was sorry for them.

At the close of this speech Lord Methuen handed the trophy and three .22 bore B.S.A. Service rifles to Sergeant Blacker (captain of the shooting eight), and presented the individual members of the team with inscribed silver pencil-cases, being models of the Lee-Enfield short rifle. The Warden (Dr. Field) called for three cheers for Lord Methuen, which were given in true schoolboy fashion, and thanked COUNTRY LIFE for inaugurating the competition.

THE ROYAL AT DONCASTER.

VERY seldom has the Royal Show opened under more depressing circumstances than those which prevailed at Doncaster on Tuesday. First in importance was the fiat of the Board of Agriculture prohibiting the exhibition of cattle, sheep, pigs and goats. It was recognised at once that this order was a necessary one. Very keen were the discussions about it, but ultimately the opinion prevailed that the course adopted was a right and proper one. Indeed, if Mr. Runciman had decided in the interests of health to stop the show altogether, it was evident that he would have been loyally obeyed. Breeders and agriculturists generally recognise fully the great peril of a general outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease, and they are ready to co-operate in every possible way with the authorities. However, there was no interference with the show beyond those classes to which we have referred. Their exclusion means the absence of certain features that have proved extremely attractive in the later exhibitions of the Royal Agricultural Society. The exclusion of sheep, for instance, means that there will be no sheepdog trials, and, generally speaking, they have been in the past always held in the middle of a ring of interested and animated spectators. Nor can there be any practical dairy tests; just as there will be no sheep-shearing, so there will be no butter-making contests, no milking competition, no butter trials. These circumstances cannot but have a depressing effect, and it was intensified on Tuesday by the weather. It rained piteously at nine o'clock in the morning, when the judging should have begun, and although this was not commenced until half-past one, the rain continued to fall in an unending shower. Nevertheless, the attendance on the first day was better at Doncaster than it was at Norwich—a striking testimony to the horse-loving proclivities of this part of Yorkshire. Certainly the judging was shorn of much of its spectacular effect; all the pains that had been taken to get the animals ready for the rings were rendered in vain by the rain, which quickly produced an appearance of bedraggled finery. It was, nevertheless, so excellent a show of horses that if only the weather would manifest some signs of improvement there was still a possibility of the show turning out a financial success; although the management adopted the just and generous policy of returning all entry money and also the prize-money contributed for the breeds that were not allowed to compete. But, after all, horses form the most spectacular feature of an exhibition, and they are so good this year and the Doncastrians are so keen on them that, with anything like suitable weather, the later days ought to see a great increase of gate money. Be it observed that the conditions of publication render it necessary for these comments to be made on Wednesday morning, and we are obliged to treat of conditions that will have been determined before these lines are in our readers' hands. In the judging the Shires were given first place, and a pleasant surprise was furnished, as has often before happened, by Lord Rothschild, who sent into the ring a yearling, Champion's Challenger, by Childwick Champion, that was easily top of his class and will probably be heard of again. Blacklands Kingmaker, from the same stud, did not sustain the position he had gained at

The presentation of the COUNTRY LIFE Officers Training Corps Trophy (for schools having not more than one company of Infantry), won by Trent College, Derbyshire, was made by Brigadier-General Congreve, V.C., on Wednesday, June 26th, the occasion being Speech Day.

In the course of his address General Congreve said that this was an excellent competition for Public Schools, and we owed much to Mr. Edward Hudson and COUNTRY LIFE for introducing this new form of competition to schoolboys. It was the first time that the landscape targets had been used in competitions with other Public Schools. People who had become used to the old-fashioned "bullseye" were seriously handicapped in war-time. At over six hundred yards range no objective was clearly defined to the naked eye, therefore minute description of the targets on the landscape was necessary for accurate and telling fire. The Boer War gave us an instance of where practice in bullseye firing was of little avail, the real objective being so frequently indefinite. Such competitions as these made rifle-firing of much more practical value as being more rapid and, therefore, more nearly approaching Service conditions. He expressed the hope that Trent College O.T.C. might long be the holders of the cup they had so skilfully won in this competition, organised and inaugurated in so patriotic a spirit by COUNTRY LIFE. The individual members of the team were presented with inscribed silver pencil-cases, being models of the Lee-Enfield short rifle and, in addition, three .22 bore B.S.A. rifles of the same pattern.

London, but had to give way to Messrs. Forshaw's Tandridge Coming King, ultimately awarded the champion gold cup for the best stallion, the reserve being Champion Goalkeeper. It is not by any means certain that in subsequent contests this decision may not possibly be reversed. The championship for the best mare or filly went to Messrs. Whitley's Lorna Doone, Mr. John Bradley's Halstead Royal Duchess being reserve. The other championships were as follows: The best Clydesdale stallion: Mr. W. Dunlop's The Dunure; reserve, Messrs. A. and W. Montgomery's Baron Derby. The best Clydesdale mare or filly: Mr. S. Mitchell's Boquhan Lady Peggy; reserve, Mr. J. E. Kerr's Phyllis. The best Suffolk stallion: Mr. K. M. Clark's Sudbourne Peter; reserve, Sir Cuthbert Quilter's Bawdsey Harvest King. The best hackney stallion: Sir W. Gilbey's Sparkling Danegelt; reserve, Mr. W. W. Rycroft's Admiral Cliquot. The best hackney mare or filly: Mr. F. J. Batchelor's Beckingham Lady Grace; reserve, Mr. W. Burnell Tubbs' The Whip. The best Shetland pony: Mr. W. Mungall's Thorald. The hackney classes were extremely well filled, the breed being highly popular in Yorkshire.

One of the constantly growing features is the exhibition of poultry and produce. The Royal does well to encourage entries of this description, as they undoubtedly possess a special interest for large numbers of people who have not time or opportunity to go in for the more expensive breeds of cattle and of horses. The show of poultry was excellent and representative; so were the exhibits of cheese and cider.

In the course of the day a meeting of the Council of the society was held in the showyard for the purpose of discussing the situation. Lord Middleton, the president, was in the chair, and Sir Gilbert Greenall, the hon. director, explained the various steps that had been taken. On Sunday night he received a telegram which caused him to advise the men in charge of stock to ascertain from their employers whether, under the circumstances, they thought it better to let the animals stay on at the showyard or have them returned. On Monday he received an official telegram prohibiting the exhibition of cattle, and arranged with the railway companies to return the exhibits. This was accomplished in a manner that did credit to the readiness of the railway companies to deal with what we may call emergency transfer. A staff was put on day and night, and the animals had to be conveyed to the station in a recognised order, so that they might be promptly sent off to their proper destinations. Very few animals other than horses were in the yards when the show was opened. This was equally creditable to the railway companies and to the promptitude and organising ability of Sir Gilbert Greenall. The Council unanimously passed a resolution expressing their support of Mr. Runciman's action in the crisis. Mr. Adeane, on behalf of the finance committee, which had met earlier in the day, recommended that fees paid for entries in the prohibited classes should be refunded and the contributions of the Breed Societies be returned, and he congratulated the society on the financial soundness which made such a course possible. It is very desirable that the praiseworthy action of the Council should be widely known.



H. H. Myers

AT THE FOOT OF THE FALL.

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TALES OF COUNTRY LIFE.

BLACK KNIGHTS.

BY
ELIZABETH KIRK.



"I TRENCH the ground in autumn," said the Professor, "sow the seeds under glass in February, and transplant later twelve inches apart. Quite early I support by thin twigs, afterwards by sticks eight feet high. As to watering, I give little during early growth, increasing later, and as the buds appear use liquid fertiliser sparingly. You will, I hope, see my results." He spoke slowly, a touch of pedantry in his voice, as one who knows, for already he had scored a few successes in his sweet pea culture.

The man on the other side of the laurel hedge which separated the gardens, the commonplace man who had "made his pile" retailing frozen meat, laughed outright. "Lor'! he blustered. 'Lor'! what a fuss to make about growing a handful of sweet peas! I fork up the ground and chuck in the seed, then leave the thing to Nature, and what Nature don't do the missis can!"

The Professor's thin lips curved into a satirical smile. "Ah!" he said, "just so. But I grow for exhibition. This year I expect—I intend—to secure the fifty-guinea prize for a special variety."

His neighbour slapped a shining cloth-clad knee with a fat hand. "Bravo! bravo!" he cried. "Now, this is the thing of the season. You mean the Black Knight competition? I've entered for the same."

The Professor bowed his head.

The man went on in the same derisive humour, "Good! Good! You and me, Professor." (You and me indeed! How it grated on the Professor's refined ear.) "You and me are rivals. I'm going to have in this strip of garden this year a triumph of horticulture."

The Professor winced. "No triumphs are obtained without great labour," he said. "Good-night, Mr. Ullastone." He turned and walked to his door.

Mr. Ullastone turned, too, and joined Jeanette, his flimsy, fickle little wife, in the summer-house. In a voice so loud that it penetrated the open windows of the Professor's study, he mimicked the tone and words of the man he despised—despised because he was old and poor, clever and pedantic. "The old fool!" he said. "For ever groping among his seeds and his liquid fertilisers! I'll take the wind out of his sails! I'll teach him that he's not the only man who can grow a seed or rear a bloom, I'll be dashed if I don't!"

Now it was already spring, and those early preliminaries of which the Professor had made boast were finished facts. The planting-out was accomplished, and the first slim brown twigs were supporting sturdy young plants, while stored away in a shed were the eight-foot sticks, round which presently the vigorous tendrils would fling their strong, green arms. None could ever know exactly what this culture of sweet peas meant to the Professor, from the time that the little pothook-shaped shoots pushed their way up through the warm earth to the end of the sweet pea chapter, when in the shelter of profuse vigorous foliage, strong dark leaves and matted tendrils, a few belated blooms lent their washed-out colour; while the pods, some brown and shrunken, others green and well filled with swelling seeds, held out the promise of next year's beauty. April! and the robust young plants were running up with the force of health; then April gave place to May, and the tendrils were clinging to the supporting sticks. May smiled to greet June, and lo! buds were unfolding, and then—then—something happened—something which altogether and for ever changed the Professor's outlook on sweet pea culture. For, bending to his Plato one evening, he was aware of an intrusion in his study, and all intrusions annoyed him. But to-night he was more than usually annoyed, for the intruder was a woman, and the woman no other than Jeanette Ullastone, the flighty, foolish Jeanette. She wore the absurdly exaggerated dress of the day and ridiculously tight shoes, and she tripped on her toes into the room and looked shy (which the Professor was certain she was not), interlacing her little short red fingers, bedecked with glittering rings, in and out of each other. Now, Jeanette Ullastone was always "impossible" to the Professor; but Jeanette Ullastone with dishevelled hair, tear-dimmed eyes and twitching lips was not to be reckoned with. He rose, took the hand she held up and out to him, and asked in his courtly way how he could serve her.

She stood, as some vain, awkward child, seeking her words.

"Come, come!" said the Professor, "you want to speak to me." He placed her in a chair. "Now, tell me, what is the matter?" Then, as she mopped away her tears with a tiny, inadequate handkerchief, while she still sobbed, he went on: "You are in some trouble. You want my help?"

"How clever you are," she faltered. "How could you guess? But you are right. A terrible thing has happened. George has had a seizure of some kind. He fell in the garden this morning, and I thought he was dead, but it was wrong. Oh! Professor, what shall I do? His lips keep moving, and he tries to tell me something, but I cannot understand. And I am so frightened. Will you, can you come?"

He laid down his Plato and went. He found his rival lying on his back. His mouth had an ugly droop to one side, his hand fell limp as he raised it. His eye squinted horribly. His lips, however, moved, and the Professor caught some ill-framed words: "Exhibition. Black Knights. Fifty guineas."

Jeanette Ullastone stood sobbing in a far corner of the room as the Professor bent over the man who had so lately set his every nerve ajar. He spoke quietly and distinctly into his ear, and, strangely, he did not hesitate a moment for his words. "Take no trouble," he said, "I'll see to your Black Knights for you. The prize shall be yours if I can help you to it." Then he patted the heaving shoulder, the shoulder which had so often bent beneath the weight of frozen lambs, and strode from the room.

Jeanette followed him. "You don't know George," she said. ("Thank God, no!" he told himself.) "You don't know George. He's the dearest and best of men. Everything he handles turns to money. He doesn't care a bit for the fifty guineas. But he promised from the first that if he got the prize I should have the cheque, and George never breaks a promise—in private life, I mean. And oh! Professor, you don't know what that cheque means to me. You've never had family troubles. You don't know what it is to have a son who daren't face his father! Just now I wouldn't for worlds have George know—just now there's some fresh trouble, and I've promised Austin (Austin's my son) to let him have the money if I get it. And George, making so sure, and Austin always writing for cash, and I between the two—"

"I quite understand," said the Professor. "No explanations are necessary; I have given my word to Geo—George." He was gone as she turned to thank him.

Reviewing Ullastone's row of Black Knights, the Professor was forced to the conclusion that they had done remarkably well considering how lax had been the care bestowed on them. They were strong, healthy plants, with a good show of blooms. They compared almost favourably with his own, on which he had grudged no care or thought. He took over the charge of them with mingled feelings. Above all things, he had desired that his Black Knights should beat Ullastone's, yet in a moment of kindly impulse he had promised that if he could manage it Ullastone's should beat his! He coveted greatly the honour of the fifty-guinea prize himself, yet to this man, who cared neither for the prize nor the distinction of winning it, he had given his word that it should not be his fault if the prize were not Ullastone's. Was ever man more sorely placed? It had been far easier for him to have retired gracefully from the contest.

He told himself that had Ullastone been a bachelor he would never have let himself in for so hard a job. It was all owing to the flighty, flimsy Jeanette, who had stood before him twisting her fingers like a schoolgirl and crying like a child. He could have dealt with the man. Man to man. But this foolish little woman and her abandoned son! His heart had softened to them. He was now bound by an honour stronger than any law to win, if he could, the fifty-guinea prize for his rival competitor, and the tending of his own and Ullastone's sweet peas became fraught with jealous ardour. Loving plants, too, for their own sakes, he cared for Ullastone's peas in the same proportion that a mother gives of her best to her weakest offspring, and he counted eagerly the number of buds and noted the perfection of them day by day with increasing apprehension.

Just because his own soul cried out in longing for *his* blooms to be the best, he fancied Ullastone's were; just because he now feared that he should win the coveted fifty guineas (Jeanette's and Austin's sorely-needed fifty guineas), he watched tenfold more rigidly Ullastone's chances. By day he cursed the problem which had been thrust, unwanted, on him, the simple problem of doing to others as he would that they should do to him; but in the cool evenings, first in his own, then in his neighbour's garden, he was bound to own that the rivalry had become exciting and the contest not without its compensations.

One evening Jeanette joined him as he was bobbing about with his watering-can. "Dear Professor," she said, with a little effusive gush, which seemed to the Professor to accentuate her insincerity, "dear Professor, do you think George has a chance?"

The hoped-for answer came. "Mr. Ullastone's Black Knights are as fine as any I have seen."

She clapped her little red hands, and her bangles jingled. She laughed in her shrill, high voice. "He'll get the prize, I know he will. George is such a clever fellow. He's got the planting hand. Everything he sows comes up. Everything he plants thrives. You don't know George, Professor. He grows potatoes so we can have them new, and, close by, mint to boil with them. He grows salads, because we both say there's nothing nicer with our cheese and beer. And broad beans to go with the gammon, and sage and onions to stuff—"

He had left her shivering.

"Poor old man," tittered the giddy Jeanette, "he feels the cold."

It wanted now but ten days to the exhibition, and all who saw the two gardens divided by the prim laurel hedge declared that the running was close between the neighbours. The Professor knew better. *He knew that Ullastone's sweet peas hadn't a chance beside his.* The awakening followed a night of doubt and anxiety. He rose up in the early hours of a summer morn and crept out into the sweet cool air to find he was first—quite a good first. And it struck him as peculiarly right and just that it should be so, considering—well, considering all things. His would be the honour, and surely he deserved some honour. His would be the fifty-guinea prize. And Ullastone's gibes about taking the wind out of his sails! The Professor chuckled. And Jeanette and the wayward Austin! He fidgeted and frowned. He rose from his chair and went over to the window, and his row of magnificent Black Knights mocked at him across the lawn. They stood upright and strong. They called him to a battle not yet won. The silence of the room oppressed him, and he drummed with his fingers on the window-pane;

then he shrugged his shoulders and went out into the sunlight. Jeanette Ullastone called to him over the trim laurel hedge:

"Austin says if I do get those fifty guineas he'll pay his debts and come home again. Oh! Professor, I'm the happiest woman in the world."

The day of the exhibition dawned dull and cloudy as, carrying his own and Ullastone's entries, the Professor made his way to the tent on the show ground and arranged the Black Knights in their specified places. No; not quite that, for with a hand that shook ever so little he set up his in Ullastone's place and Ullastone's in his. He turned quickly and left the ground whistling, and throwing his "Good-mornings" around, so that people wondered at his good humour, for could he not see that Ullastone had beaten him?

Fourteen days later, the Professor, weeding under the laurel hedge, saw a strange trio in the adjoining garden. He saw Ullastone on a lounge chair, and beside him the flighty Jeanette and her abandoned Austin.

Jeanette spoke in her clear ringing voice. "Poor old prosy Professor! I wonder if he much cared about that prize. With all his trying, George, he couldn't grow a Black Knight like yours." She laughed her little affected laugh. Ullastone laughed, too, a faint echo of his old guffaw. His mouth still drooped sideways and his eyes still squinted. He spoke like a drunken man. "I told you," he said, "that I'd take the wind out of the old fool's sails, and I have."

There was a rustle, and the Professor peeped. The frivolous Jeanette moved towards her husband, stooped over his drooping lips and kissed him. Her voice held a gentler tone, but she shook her finger at him in playful coquetry so that the bangles rattled on her wrist.

"Not a word against my Professor" (*my Professor, indeed!*). "Not a word against my Professor. Next to you, George, he's the dearest old man in the world."

The Professor gave up sweet pea culture and went in for cactus-growing instead. But the summer following the Black Knight competition a sweet pea, unasked, appeared in his garden and he had no heart to root it up. So it blossomed, and proved to be a curious sport, for which he was offered a price. Asked to name it, he hesitated, for he knew nothing of choosing names.

"Your own?" suggested the horticulturist, who was making the purchase.

The Professor halted; then, "No," he answered, a whimsical smile on his lips and a tender inflection in his voice. "No! Call it the 'Jeanette Ullastone.'"

THE ART OF FOUR-IN-HAND DRIVING

AS long as horses are used at all, four-in-hand driving will never lose its charm. There is enough risk about it to make it a sport, sufficient art to keep alive the interest. A perfect coachman, like a fine horseman, can only be formed by natural aptitude and continual practice. We may ride horses for half a lifetime and never fall off, yet not be horsemen, and drive a coach down to Ranelagh without an accident and yet not be a coachman. There never have been many fine coachmen at one time. Even in the days of Nimrod, when some men of leisure spent their whole time and much of their money on driving, the really fine artists, as they called the best performers, with a pardonable exaggeration, were few in number. Nimrod himself was only a fair performer; John Warde was at his best on a heavy coach with a full load of passengers and luggage. But real coachmen, equally good with good or bad teams over any kind of road, like Sir St. Vincent Cotton or Sir Felix Agar, not to speak of Jack White, Mr. Stevenson and Mr. John Walker, who were professional stage coachmen by necessity or choice, were never common.

And it is to driving a stage-coach that all real lovers of driving turn in order to obtain the full pleasure of coaching. It is all very well to own a private coach and four well-trained horses, and to appear in the Park or to drive to Ranelagh—still, thanks to its vice-chairman, Sir George Hastings, a home of coaching—but when we know a road and a team by heart we begin to long for something more, and it is the road coach that gives us what we want. It is impossible to exercise the art of coachmanship, or even to know what it is, unless we drive many different horses over various roads, keeping time at our stages and bringing a load of passengers to their destination smoothly, safely and punctually to the appointed time. To drive a stage-coach from London to Brighton and lose no time on the way is in itself a severe test of coachmanship. The Brighton road has always been a favourite one. By this road we are led through a charming country, but that, of course, is not its chief charm to a coachman. The variety of its contour and surface, and even the traffic on it, set to the coachman the problems he loves to solve and test his skill by. To keep successive teams of four horses

trotting smoothly and easily from London to Brighton is not an easy task.

An amateur may by the assistance of a professional to teach him, and with four really well-mannered horses, learn to drive fairly well. He may be able to sit easily and firmly on his box (if one may judge by what one sees sometimes, by no means an universal accomplishment among amateur coachmen), to hold his reins in the right way, resisting all temptations to drop his near wheeler's rein, and he may learn to carry his whip in coachman-like fashion. He may also have overcome the first difficulties which beset every four-in-hand coachman—to start evenly and to stop quietly at a desired point. These things he must have learned, but when mounted on the box of a stage-coach with a load behind him and four unknown horses in front, he has a harder task. To drive a road coach gives him a sense of responsibility and of the need of caution, combined with courage and nerve, which are among the qualifications of a coachman. If he is wise he will walk round his team and see how they are bitted; if a horse's rein is on the bar he had better find out why it is so. It may possibly not be necessary, and he will have a pleasanter drive if it is altered. He will note the length of the traces; the wheelers ought to be one hole shorter on their inside than their outside traces. Another point he will notice is how the wheelers are poled up. If he expects to find the road bad, the looser the pole-chains the better, and in any case wheelers in a stage-coach should have more liberty than in a private coach or carriage. Then with the whip and reins in his right hand he gets on the box and sits down at once. This seems obvious, but some people have a way of standing up and looking round. This is unworkmanlike and dangerous; if the horses move and the coachman falls off the box he may hurt himself, and certainly his dignity will suffer. Then the late Duke of Beaufort's precept to call out distinctly "Sit fast" before starting should never be forgotten. When once a man undertakes to drive a stage-coach the safety and comfort of his passengers should not be out of his mind for a moment. Then, gathering up his reins with a gentle, even feeling on the mouths of his team, he gives the word to let go. The wheelers should start just the least moment before the leaders. Of course, in theory, the whole team should start together,

but in practice with most road teams and many coachmen it is better for the wheelers to feel the weight of the coach first. Now with a straight road before him and the horses settling to their work, all is fairly easy and straightforward till the end of the stage. I saw it stated somewhere the other day that when once a team is fairly started and the road presents no especial difficulties, anyone can drive a team. Can they? I doubt it. If we watch some amateur coachmen we shall see them continually fidgeting with the reins with their right hands, now lengthening one or shortening another. The team will seem to thread its way through the streets of the country town easily and smoothly with but the least possible assistance from the right hand. This should be kept free for the whip and for the especial emergencies of the road. Horses whose mouths are always being interfered with never go quite comfortably. The right hand is, however, of immense value. I was once driving a team with an off-leader that pulled and resented interference, and a near-wheeler



WELL TOGETHER.

take them off their draught on the top of a hill. On level ground, still more on a slight downward slope, the leaders should do no more than just carry their bars; but when we breast an ascent they should go right into their collars and do their share of work. Four horses trotting well together will drag a loaded coach up a hill with less labour than if they walked; each horse can at a trot best do its share. Now if we suppose that the team are nearing the top of the hill and that the road is of the switchback order, with a sharp descent before the summit

that hung on my hand towards the end of the stage. There was a steep hill down to the last change, and I wanted to steady the horses without altering the feeling of their mouths. I brought the right hand in front of the left, took the reins, and then, bringing the left in front of the right, obtained the additional hold without undue disturbance. I have heard it said this was wrong, but the old coachmen did it, and it seems a valuable common-sense manoeuvre. Then the right hand is wanted to "loop" the leaders' reins or



A GOOD ROAD PACE.

is reached, the leaders should be taken off their draught and the pace of the team reduced so that we shall begin the slope downwards at the slowest possible pace; so will the coach go steadily down until nearing the bottom, when the raising of the coachman's thumb will release the looped reins and the leaders, and the team will start on the next ascent with the impetus of the incline in their favour.

But I have said nothing about the whip. Probably with the class of horse driven nowadays, even in road coaches, the whip is seldom used, and I believe that some owners of private coaches never let out the thong the season through. Nevertheless, we ought to be able to use the whip, and nothing but diligent practice will enable us to do so. The best way to begin to learn to drive four horses is to drive a tandem, if only because the whip is absolutely necessary to the tandem-driver, and he learns to use it of necessity. We also learn how to hold the reins and the value of a steady feeling on the horses' mouths. A tandem leader feels the least possible touch on the rein, and a light hand is one of the first necessities of success. Tandem-driving will not teach us to drive four horses, but it will prepare us to learn. I once myself drove a tandem over three thousand

five hundred miles on rough roads, and sometimes no roads at all, and have a great idea of its value as practice for the use of the whip. There are so many things one might, and could, say about driving, but space is limited, and the art of coachmanship is long. "If you live to be eighty years old, and then are able to drive," writes the late Colonel Baillie, "you may still find something to learn." This is most true, and I believe the only coachman I ever knew of who drove at or near that age, the late Lord Macclesfield, one of the finest whips of his day, would have endorsed the saying. There is one thing we may add, and that is that, while we cannot read too carefully, or listen too attentively to, the precepts of the masters of the art, yet we must always be guided by circumstances, and at times defy all rules in the interests of the mastery of our team or the safety of our passengers. Under certain circumstances of roads and with certain kinds of horses, the old stage-coachman would drive with a "full hand" or a "loose string," contrary to all the theories of coachmanship. Nevertheless, the beginner will be best prepared for the inevitable difficulties and emergencies if he observes carefully the rules and customs established by long experience. X.

THE UNCONQUERABLE CHARM OF SUSSEX.

BY ALGERNON BLACKWOOD.



C. H. Hewitt.

NEAR FITTLEWORTH.

Copyright.

IN my casual reading the other day I came across a book written by Mr. Hilaire Belloc and published by Nelson. It is called "The Four Men," and relates the doings of a small band, who in a kind of little antiphony set forth the virtues of Sussex. They are, indeed, a wise and jolly company, these four men who travel together the roads and woods of Sussex, and interpret the moods of this fine county through their own. It is, at the same time, a journey across the Map of Life, for though it only lasts four days, these four days seem to correspond to the four seasons of the year, in another sense to childhood, youth, maturity and old age. And the men are types—old Grizzlebeard, the ripe philosopher,

a Poet, a Sailor and "Myself." "Myself" starts alone, and picks the others up along the route; but they all love Sussex, understand its unconquerable charm, know its history in and out, and all their diverting discussions *are* Sussex, for they are inspired by the various qualities of Sussex they meet upon their way. The Weald, the oak woods, the wide, sea-tasting skies of Sussex pour through every page; the Downs hold the chapters in their hollows. Wind carries the reader along. The vitality of this rushing, stimulating book is equal to the sincerity that produced it. You feel the author has a passionate sense of the beauty of this old county where he lives himself. His illustrations reveal it too. As you read it you feel you

walk the Downs by his side and hear his cantering mind reveal them to you: "There, a day's march away to the south, stood the rank of the Downs. No exiles who have seen them thus, coming back after many years, and following the road from London to the sea, hungry for home, were struck more suddenly or more suddenly uplifted by that vision of their hills than we four men so coming upon it that morning, and I was for the moment their leader; for this was a place I had cherished ever since I was a boy." Mr. Belloc, born in France, was on the Downs at three; they brought him up; their spell—you feel it in this book—still holds him fast to-day. The "nightly majesty of the Downs" lies close about his heart.

Thus, as they dream and wander, sleeping in copses, inns or hedges, as the case may be, these four men talk, and their talk is entertaining or instructive as you choose to find it. They talk of everything under heaven and upon the other side of hell, but the talk always carries you along with them towards the Downs and towards the spot of magic where the Arun meets the sea. This is their objective, their end of life. "What the Sailor says is true. When we get over that lift of land upon the Amberley Road before us we shall see Arun a long way off between his reeds, and the tide tumbling in Arun down towards the sea. We shall see Houghton and Westburton Hill, and Duncton further along, and all the wall of them, Graffham and Bailton, and so to Harting, which is the end where the county ceases and where you come to shapeless things. All this is our own



C. H. Hewitt. THE OLD HORSE BRIDGE NEAR FITTLEWORTH.

Copyright.

country, and it is to see it at last that we have travelled so steadfastly during these long days." The book is an expression of the hunger for home which lies deep in the heart of every decent man. That is why you will find sincerity and passion and a burning touch of poetry all through the talk and travel. And when they come to Arun, and before they say good-bye and go their separate ways again, these four men tell their early loves—look back, that is, upon the early beginnings of their roving lives and speak a little sadly of the things that lured



C. H. Hewitt.

THE FERRY OVER THE ARUN AT BURY.

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BURY FROM THE BANK OF THE ARUN.

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them on towards adventure down the years. It is very fine, this last bit of the book.

Their discussions, moreover, never hold you over-long; they are stories by the way, as told round the camp-fires of nightly bivouacs, or by the roadside when they halt for lunch and watch the nearing Downs. They talk of literature and politics, of poetry and pigs, of the little people, of what is best in life and what is worst, and of what each man would do if he

were rich. The account of the Hideous Being (his card bore the inscription, "Mr. Deusipsenotavit—Brooks's"), who overheard this last discussion and, when finally urged, contributed his own opinion, "I *am* rich," is as deep a bit of true philosophy as you may find in all the schools; but there is everywhere wit and fun and laughter besides, lambent strokes of irony, keen judgments of modern life flung off by one or other, and a boisterous high spirits through it all that is contagious and makes you feel

the winds of Sussex blowing strong and free. And the old Sussex songs ring through every chapter, given with the music for all to echo who have voices ("I will sing Gol-ier," that delightful, ancient song of Sussex), and other songs as well, not so easily classified. Mr. Belloc has put a bit of his heart, certainly of his early love, into this modest two-shilling volume. His love of battle too—and battles. All the Sussex battles live again as you read about them howling and clashing among the undulating woodlands and over the grand old Downs of Sussex.

All had seen fairies, too, except "Myself," and he had heard them only. "'What did they say to you?' asks the Sailor, ever athirst for information. 'They told me I should never get home, and I never have.' . . . As we talked the darkness began to gather, for we had waited once or twice by the way, and especially at that little lift in the road when one passes through a glen of oaks and sees before one great flat water-meadows, and beyond them the high Downs quite near. The sky was already of an apple green to the westward, and in the eastern blue there were stars. There also shone what had not



C. H. Hewitt

NEAR FITTLEWORTH MILL.

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yet appeared upon that windless day, a few small wintry clouds, neat and defined in heaven. Above them the moon, past her first quarter, but not yet full, was no longer pale, but began to make a cold glory; and all that valley of Adur was a great and solemn sight to see as we went forward upon our adventure that led nowhere and away. To us four men, no one of whom could know the other, and who had met by I could not tell what chance, and would part very soon for ever, these things were given. All four of us together received the sacrament of that wide and silent beauty, and we ourselves went in silence to receive it. . . ."

The Southern Hills and the South Sea
They blow such gladness into me,
That when I get to Burton Sands
And smell the smell of the Home Lands,
My heart is all renewed and fills
With the Southern Sea and the South Hills.

And on All Hallowe'en they sleep in the open, the spell of Chanctonbury, that grave Sussex landmark, mightily upon them.

"The moon stood over Chanctonbury, so removed and cold in her silver that you might almost have thought her

Above all, however, do not miss the exquisite story of how St. Dunstan pulled the Devil's nose. For that also reveals Sussex.

LAW AND THE LAND.

THE decisions as to the rights of tenants-for-life and remaindermen in respect of the payment of the new Land Taxes are getting to be a little confusing. A few months ago we noted a case in which it was held that there was no general duty upon the trustees of a settled estate to check valuations made under the Finance Act, and that if the tenant-for-life wanted them checked, he must pay the cost himself. Last week the point came up again, on an application that such costs should be defrayed by trustees out of capital, and Mr. Justice Parker, while refraining from laying down any definite principle of general application, expressed the opinion that increment value duty and reversion duty might be paid out of capital, and gave the trustees leave to take such steps as they were advised would be reasonable and proper to test the valuation. It would seem that each case must depend upon its own circumstances, and that where these are such that the protection of the estate demands a checking of the valuations, it may be done by the trustees, otherwise the tenant-for-life must do it at his own expense.



C. H. Hewitt.

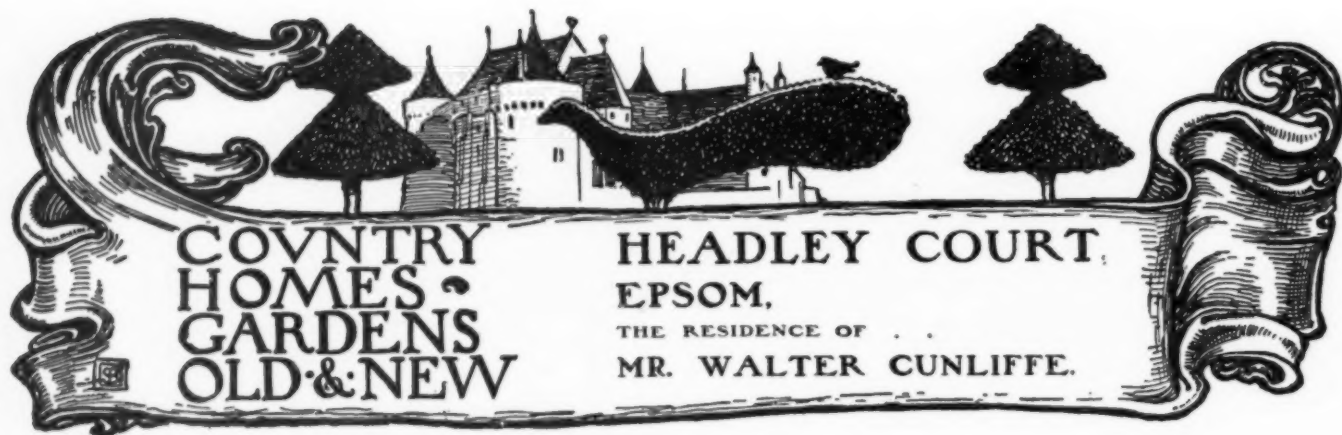
AMBERLEY CHURCH AND VILLAGE FROM THE MARSHES.

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careless of the follies of men; little clouds, her attendants, shone beneath her worshipping, and they presided together over a general silence. Her light caught the edges of the Downs. There was no mist. She was still frosty-clear when I saw her set behind those hills. The stars were more brilliant after her setting, and deep quiet held the valley of Adur, my little river, slipping at low tide towards the sea." My little river! My dear old Sussex! There you have the keynote of this delicious book.

On Sussex hills where I was bred,
When lanes in autumn rains are red,
When Arun tumbles in his bed,
And busy great gusts go by;
When branch is bare in Burton Glen
And Bury Hill is whitening, then,
I drink strong ale with gentlemen;
Which nobody can deny, deny,
Deny, deny, deny, deny,
Which nobody can deny!

Farmers and others whose fields adjoin a railway, and who are so subject to the possibility of having their crops and buildings destroyed or damaged by fire caused by sparks or cinders emitted from locomotive engines, should carefully note the recent decision of Mr. Justice Channell in the case of "Martin v. Great Eastern Railway Company," since the law as there laid down may seriously affect their right to recover damages for the loss occasioned by such a fire. Under the Railway Fires Act, 1905, a person who has been injured by a fire to which the Act relates must give notice of his claim, in writing, to the railway company within seven days of the fire, and must also send to the company particulars of the damage within fourteen days of the fire. The learned judge decided that the particulars must state the amount of damage claimed in money, and that merely detailing the specific loss, without affixing a monetary equivalent, is not a sufficient compliance with the Act. Mr. Martin had given a notice that he claimed damages, and followed it with particulars of the damage done by the fire, both being within the prescribed time; but he had not in them stated in pounds, shillings and pence the sum he claimed from the company. It was held that the notices were insufficient, and that, consequently, he was precluded from recovering any damages at all for the loss he had suffered in the destruction by fire of some twelve acres of barley.



MR. GEORGE CLINCH, in his book entitled "Bygone Surrey," points out as one of the distinctive features of the county that it abounds in every part with picturesque homesteads and cottages, and it is equally true that it is rich in stately country seats and mansions, remarkable either for the historical interest attaching to them or for their architectural excellence and the charm of their situation. The reasons why Surrey should be thus favoured are obvious enough, and we find them, first, in the easiness of access from all parts of it to the metropolis, and next in the great attraction of its beautiful and exceedingly varied scenery. A famous traveller who knew the Southern Counties of England better than perhaps any man before or since his time, having passed through them on foot or on horseback again and again, examining them with the careful observation of a farmer—we mean William Cobbett, the author of "Rural Rides"—breaks out frequently into enthusiastic descriptions of Surrey. At one point he says, "there is hardly another such a pretty four miles in all England. The road is good; the soil is good; the houses are neat; the people are neat; the hills, the woods, the meadows, all are beautiful. Nothing wild and bold, to be sure, but exceedingly pretty; and it is almost impossible to ride along these four

miles without feelings of pleasure, though you have rain for your companion, as it happened to be with me."

It is one of these interesting country seats of Surrey a description of which we present to our readers to-day—Headley Court, Epsom, the residence of Mr. Walter Cunliffe. The situation of the house is a delightful one. True, the bolder Surrey hills, famous for the prospects they afford, are some miles further to the south, for it is not until we get to Reigate that we are close to the chalk-hills. Yet the Downs about Epsom have a beauty of their own—those celebrated Downs to which tens of thousands of Londoners make annual pilgrimage, and on which in olden days shepherds kept their sheep within bounds by hurling stones from a curious implement described by Aubrey as "a half-horn slit *secundum longitudinem*" nailed to the end of a long staff. Near these Downs lies Headley Court. To the north, and within a few hundred yards of the house, runs the ancient Ermyng Way, a continuation of Watling Street.

There are many traces on the property of a long-forgotten past, in the shape of early Saxon tumuli, which have, unfortunately, all been despoiled; but the present owner, while trenching for a plantation, discovered what was supposed to be an old paved roadway, which could be traced running along





"COUNTRY LIFE."

SOUTH FRONT.



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LAWNS AND YEWE HEDGES.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

the crest of the undulating Downs from the Nower Wood, or, as it was called formerly, "La Nore," to Cherkley Wood, and so on to the Dorking Valley. It had, however, at some very early date, been filled up with old bones and broken pottery, and had evidently been used by the Early Britons as a rubbish heap, as not a single complete article was found in it. Curiously enough, Headley Court is not mentioned either by Manning and Bray or by Aubrey, and the earliest really authentic mention of the house is found on a memorial tablet in Headley Church, where the inscription runs as follows: "Sacred to the memory of Simon Crane, Esq., who on a visit at Headley Court died August the twentieth 1775, aged 75."

Though in the main a modern house, Headley Court has as its core a Jacobean farmhouse, the original walls of which are indicated on the accompanying plan by hatched lines; but when, owing to the stress of age, it was found necessary to pull down most of the original building and reconstruction was begun, the foundations of a very much larger house were discovered of which no record remains, and the present building, designed by Mr. Edward Warren, is almost on the original lines. It is, however, a curious coincidence that in Manning and Bray's "History of Surrey," Vol. II., page 637, it is said: "There is a print of a design by Price, an architect, for a house here (Headley) the front of which would have been of an immoderate extent, but there is no scale: it is not dated and it is not said for whom it was intended." Its title of "Court" is a just one, for although in the memory of man it was only known as Court House Farm, the Courts of the Manor were held in the original house,

and there was, until quite recently, a room in the house with the old ring in the ceiling to which prisoners had been tied. Unfortunately, it was found impossible to preserve this.

There are remains of very old building in the basement and cellars, and an Elizabethan coin and several of the reign of Charles I. were found between the floors and ceilings, pointing to the Jacobean period as that in which the house was built. The additions and alterations have been carried out as far as possible in the style of that period. All the old panelling was preserved and, in particular, one room known as the "White Room," which was formerly the drawing-room of the house, has the old Elizabethan "jewel panelling." It is made of chestnut wood and painted white. The

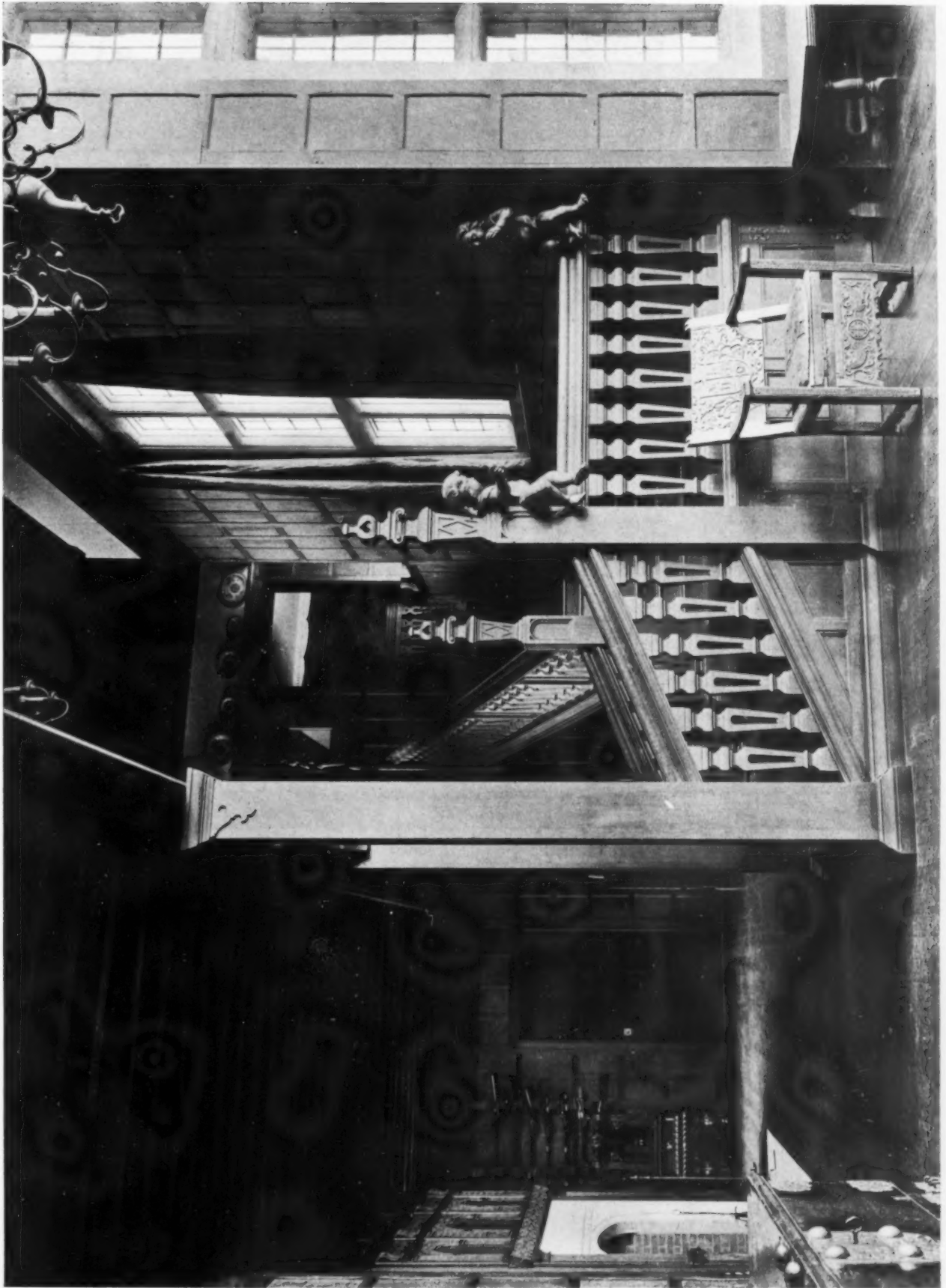
historical character of the building is further emphasised by the use of much old and interesting panelling gathered from



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THE HALL GALLERY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



"COUNTRY LIFE."

THE HALL.



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THE DRAWING-ROOM.

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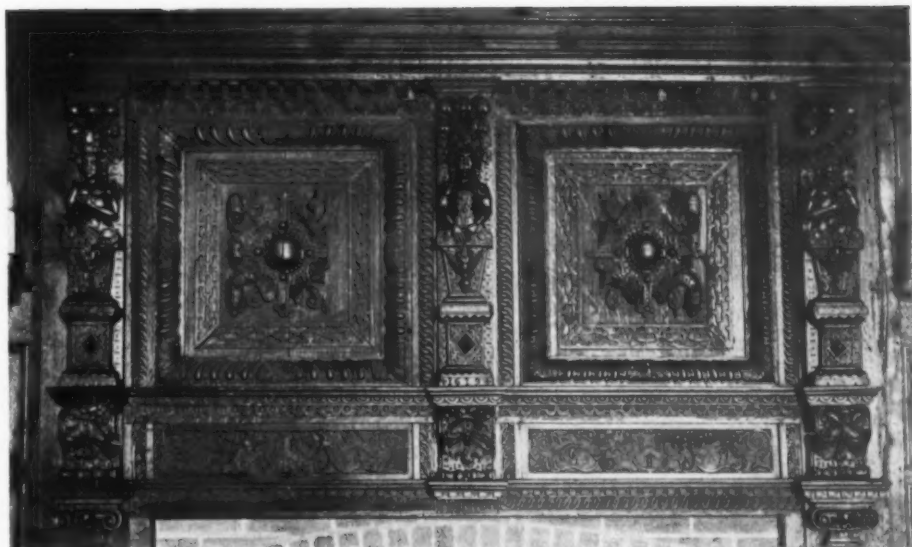
BILLIARD-ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

houses that have been destroyed. In the result we rub shoulders with various personages who have made their mark on English history, and of them something must be written after the house has been described.

Headley Court is approached from the north along a broad drive flanked by well-trimmed yew hedges. The original house, however, had its entrance facing south and was then reached over a sunk fence, which has since been replaced by an avenue of cut beeches. The south side, where was formerly the farmyard, is laid out as a large lawn, broken by topiary work, which appears in our third illustration. The main gardens lie, however, on the north-east side and are made the more interesting by the provision of a great bathing-pond. A practical point with regard to the pergola pillars is also worth noting. They are of grey slate, which has weathered to the colour of sea-worn oak and has the great advantage that it is, for all practical purposes, everlasting. Very attractive, too, are the many lead figures which have been employed. There is one gay-looking person busy with pipe and drum. In a fountain basin in the north-east garden several chubby little boys sit on over-turned vases, these figures having come from the Rye House, the scene of the famous Rye House Plot; and at the south-west two classical figures keep watch over the big yew sundial. In the lower walled garden there is another sundial of very original design; an octagon showing a dial on each of its eight faces is raised some seven or eight feet from the ground, while overhead stands a group of Atlases in lead bearing a world on their bent shoulders. Among the most striking features of the gardens are the yew hedges, to which allusion has been made; those surrounding the lawn are broken at regular intervals by wedge-shaped clumps or buttresses of clipped golden yew projecting into the lawn and giving an admirable contrast of colour. Looking from the house, it seems to be framed in greenery, to which a larch plantation that crowns the rising ground beyond presents a pleasing background.

When the house is entered, the first thing to catch the eye is the unusual character of the old painted panelling in the entrance hall. It is no part of the original Court House, but belongs to the same period. There is a fine hall with tall windows throwing a flood of light on the richly-treated staircase. This, again, owes no little of its charm to the engaging wooden cupids which sit on the hand-rails and on the landing newel-posts. South of the hall is the drawing-room, with a simple panelled ceiling modelled in plaster by Mr. Laurence Turner, and so justly in the spirit of the old work that if the Jacobean owner of the Court House could return, he would certainly detect no new note of craftsmanship. Not only are the dining-room walls covered with contemporary panelling, but the oak furniture, which is probably unique, is of the same period. Throughout the house, from cellar to attic, there is not a foot of wall-paper,



Copyright. OVER CHIMNEY-PIECE IN CROMWELL'S ROOM. "COUNTRY LIFE."



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PAINTED PANELS IN ENTRANCE HALL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

as every room is lined with wainscot, either ancient or modern. The furniture has been the collection of years and is, almost without exception, English; one table of great interest, having been made by Sheraton for Sir Joshua Reynolds, has only passed through the hands of one other man before coming into the possession of its present owner. There is a remarkable set of six chairs in carved oak, beautiful in workmanship and in excellent preservation, of which the earliest is dated 1602 and the latest 1655, the dates being carved on each; all of these, although ranging over half a century, are so precisely of one character in style and pattern that they are either the production of a single hand or wrought in one workshop, and as we understand they were acquired at different times and from various sources in the Eastern Counties, the bringing of them together into one house seems a piece of uncommonly good fortune.

So rich is the house in antiquities and interesting curiosities that we shall not attempt to mention them all, but a few remain to which we must briefly allude. The large brass-bound chest in the hall was the treasure-chest of Charles I., and the old oak napkin-press is the original of the illustration in Shaw's "Ancient Furniture," and was once owned by Sir Samuel Meyrick of Goodrich Court, Herefordshire. There is also a



Copyright.

TUDOR BEDSTEAD.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

very fine inlaid chest which used to be in Nonsuch Palace. That famous mansion, the only palace erected by Henry VIII. and a favourite resort of Queen Elizabeth, was a great treasure-house of art within and without, and has been described as marking an epoch in artistic history, "a bye-word for quaint and original beauty." The inlaid chest, which once formed an item of its contents and is now at Headley Court, is worthy of its associations. Also deserving of particular mention are two mirrors, framed in fine embroidery of the time of Charles II., which are still in their original cases, one of oak and one of tooled leather. There is a curious memorial of old-world industry—a pedlar's pack, in the shape of a wooden cupboard, with inner shelves for storing the pedlar's merchandise, and a folding top, which opens out as a table for its display. A curiosity rather more modern is the door of the condemned cell in old Newgate Prison, and now forming here an entrance to the basement near the racquet court, with its bolts and locks—a formidable barrier! This interesting door was purchased at the dismantling of the prison.

Upstairs the bedrooms are full of interesting things. There is a Tudor bedstead, now illustrated, with posts carved chevron fashion and with knops, about which an air of Gothic vitality lingers. Not less beautiful, in another manner, is the mahogany eighteenth century bed, also figured. One of the bedrooms has been named the "Cromwell Room," because the panelling came from the house at St. Ives, Huntingdonshire, which once belonged to the sister of Oliver Cromwell. The detail of the carving, particularly on the pilasters, is altogether admirable, and the overmantel is of a rich Jacobean type. The door here, now illustrated, serves as a cupboard, but was the entrance door of the original room. As all the detail of the furnishing has been kept, as far as possible, to the same period and style, we have here, as nearly as may be, a room as it existed in the early seventeenth century.

The description of the billiard-room on the ground floor has been reserved until the last, because



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THE CROMWELL DOORWAY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

in one important respect it is perhaps the most interesting. The door in the corner is of Jacobean type, and has always been known as the Pepys door. It is a little difficult to see how it became associated with the great diarist. If we may assume that his outlook on architecture was similar to his attitude towards books, he is not likely to have encouraged Jacobean work in his own house. Indeed,

we see him eager to get new chimney-pieces and the like. Pepys wanted always to be "in the movement," and Jacobean work was *démodé* in Charles II.'s reign. However that may be, the door that bears Pepys' name, and which is believed to have been the front door to one of the great man's houses, is a very attractive piece of work, and fits its new home admirably. There is an undeniable fascination attaching to Pepys' name, of which the secret is the intense interest he took in all the details of his own life, an interest which becomes infectious.

To sum up, the impression left by a view of the exquisite specimens of old craftsmanship which the house contains is



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IN DINING-ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

a renewed sense of the patient labour and thought without which such delicate and finished work can never be achieved. Beyond this, what strikes us most at Headley Court is that, with all its variety of antique and curious things, it is throughout admirably harmonious in character. It would be difficult to find a house where old and new have been mingled more graciously in the

building and where the garden forms a more natural and convincing setting.

WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

THE LITTLE OWL.

IT is a moot point whether the acclimatisation of foreign species of birds and beasts in the British Islands is a desirable thing or no. The case of the pheasant, a bird which is generally acknowledged by experts to have been a foreign introduction, probably dating back to the time of the Roman occupation, may be cited as an instance of nothing but good. That of the French partridge has been hotly debated, but the non-contents would probably have it, if the thing were put to the vote. On the whole, I confess I am against the practice, except in the very rarest instances. Our fauna is an excellent one, and it seems to me a pity to disturb its admirable balance and proportions by the introduction of new and alien forms. The most striking modern example of the ease with which a non-British species may be acclimatised and spread over the country-side is that of the little owl (*Athene noctua*), which, dating from Waterton's first introduction in Yorkshire in 1843, has now been spread as a breeding species over many parts of the country. Normally a bird of Southern and Central Europe, the little owl seems to have been unknown in England until 1758, when a specimen was caught in a chimney near the Tower of London. It is more than probable that this may have been an imported and escaped captive. Colonel Montagu, author

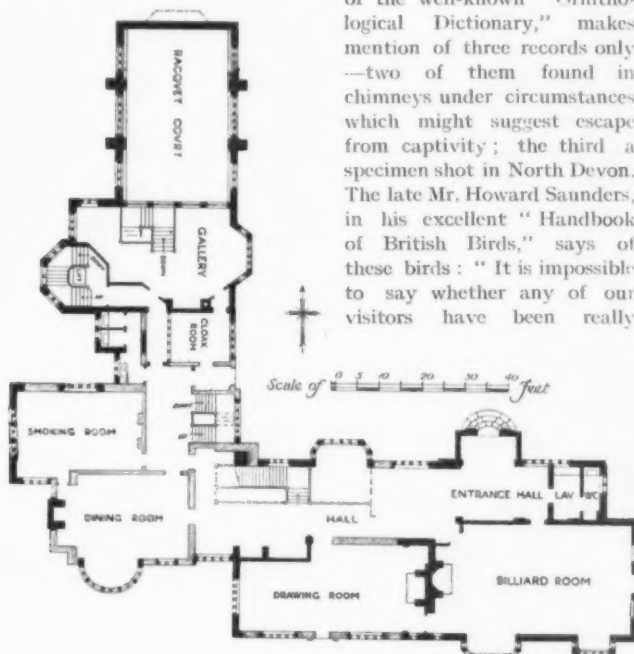
of the well-known "Ornithological Dictionary," makes mention of three records only—two of them found in chimneys under circumstances which might suggest escape from captivity; the third a specimen shot in North Devon. The late Mr. Howard Saunders, in his excellent "Handbook of British Birds," says of these birds: "It is impossible to say whether any of our visitors have been really



Copyright

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY BED.

C.L.



GROUND PLAN OF HEADLEY COURT.

wild. . . . Cages full, brought from Holland, may often be seen in Leadenhall Market; and without disputing the claim of this species to a place in the British list, it must be said that in the countries it inhabits, it is not much addicted to migration." It is remarkable that this owl has never yet, so far as I am aware, been recorded from Scotland or Ireland. During Gätke's years of observation on Heligoland he discovered only one single instance of the bird in that island. Upon the whole, I am inclined to the opinion that the little owl is not to be regarded as a British bird. With the exception of the Devonshire instance quoted by Montagu, of which there seem to be no particulars, the few instances of the occurrence of these birds in England must be regarded as not being free from the suspicion of their being escaped specimens.

THE SPREAD OF THE LITTLE OWL.

The rise and progress of this charming owl as an acclimatised bird in England is very interesting. Many people who encounter it nowadays in the depths of the country regard it as an indigenous species, and it may be worth while, therefore, to set down some account of its introduction and the ease of its acclimatisation. The little owl has, in truth, taken to its new surroundings as a duck does to water, and is now so well established that there is small probability of its disappearance. Waterton, the naturalist, as I have said, first turned out these owls in Yorkshire. This was on his estate at Walton Park, near Wakefield, where he liberated five examples. Another Yorkshire gentleman, Mr. St. Quentin, followed his example years later. The late Lord Lilford set free during the last thirty years a number of captives near Oundle, Northamptonshire. These specimens, or their progeny, have wandered to Woburn in Bedfordshire, where they are said to breed freely, as well as to Leicestershire and Rutland. Other colonies of little owls have been established in Hampshire, various parts of Hertfordshire and Kent. From these localities they have spread and are steadily spreading, so much so that the Kent Colonisation Scheme seems likely to populate much of the South-East of England.

THE LITTLE OWL AND ITS WAYS.

This neat little owl—sacred to Pallas Athene, from whom its first scientific name is taken—is brown as to its upper plumage, with conspicuous white markings on the head, nape and wings. Four bands of dull white mark the tail. The under parts are whitish, streaked with brown. The facial disc is greyish white; the eyes are yellow. The toes are not well feathered, but clothed with hairy bristles. It is worthy of note that a North Asiatic cousin of this owl, known as *Athene Bactrian*—the Bactrian little owl—has the toes clad with feathers instead of bristles. The little owl, like many others of its family, has a very mixed dietary. It devours various insects, including beetles and caterpillars, worms, slugs, snails, small birds up to the size of thrushes, mice and other small mammals. The nest is often made in a hollow tree, sometimes in farm-buildings, holes in ruins or rocks, and even rabbit-burrows; from three to five white eggs are laid, and incubation is stated to occupy twenty-eight days. April and May are the nesting months. The bird may be often heard in spring; its noisy and monotonous cry is "cu," or a repetition of that sound. This bird is much more diurnal in its habits than many of the family; quite as much so, even, as the short-eared owl, which may often be seen hunting busily in daylight over marshes and moorlands. I have more than once, during the last few years, seen the little owl out in the open, no great way from a wood, sitting on a fence-post or in a tree, apparently, although blinking solemnly, on the look-out for prey. Bird-catchers on the Continent are well aware of this habit, and often use the unfortunate little owl as a lure for small birds, by which it is speedily mobbed. Owls, when they appear in daylight, are often mobbed in this way, and only last winter I saw a short-eared owl being pursued vehemently and much badgered by vociferous sparrows. The little owl has long been known for its quaint and ridiculous contortions, alternately drawing itself up and ducking low in a buffoon-like fashion that is irresistibly laughter-compelling when witnessed. The flight of this bird is strong and well regulated, notwithstanding the fact that as it progresses it frequently dips or undulates very much after the fashion of the green woodpecker. The range of this owl in Europe seldom exceeds the 56th North Parallel. South of that latitude it is found spread over most of the Continent, its favourite localities being in the Mediterranean countries. Examples from Greece are stated by Mr. Howard Saunders to be paler than those in Western Europe. The little owls inhabiting Egypt and North Africa are of a sandy hue, and are distinguished by naturalists as a sub-species, with the title *Athene glaux*, sometimes *A. meridionalis*. Whether this distinction is necessary may be doubted, for the little owl is found varying in colour in other countries, such as Greece, Southern Russia and Asia Minor. That this interesting small owl has now fairly

made itself a home and abiding-place in England cannot be doubted. It may be cited, with the pheasant, as one of the few instances where such an introduction has been well warranted. The little owl can do no harm, and may be reasonably supposed to effect a fair amount of good in the keeping down of mice, small birds, snails, slugs and other vermin.

H. A. BRYDEN.

THE GIPSIES AND THE WATER-WAGTAIL.

THE gipsies have their bird-fetish. Some writers have wrongly supposed it to be the "kakaratchi," or magpie, which we have seen pictured as perching atop the ridge-poled tent or the caravan. But what warrant has the gorgio for making an incontinent chatterer of the corvine tribe to accompany a people who are such close guardians of their own secrets? It may be argued that magpies and gipsies are both painted black because of their various peccadilloes and proclivities for pilfering. Unfortunately for any such conclusion, the magpie is not only a black bird, but a white, and the white must therefore logically redeem him from much badness. The silent, inscrutable, secretive gipsy yet evidently distrusts all the corvines as much as the gorgio does.

Which, then, is the true gipsy bird? Though not as big or conspicuous as the magpie, it is another black-and-white, or pied. It is the smallest bird that walks (for most of them hop), but it has also a running gait. Other birds are brighter coloured, and others are liked because they sing, yet none is more elegant in form than the water-wagtail, none more spotlessly clean, none more confiding, and hardly one such a universal favourite. Widely distributed throughout the four seasons of the year, it is known to everybody who takes only a casual interest in bird-life. Always full of energy and good spirits, we may be quite sure that the specific name of the water-wagtail (*Motacilla lugubris*) has nothing whatever to do with any fancied lugubriousness or aspect of melancholy such as a gipsy might have when communing with the Sibyls, Fates or Oracles; this "lugubris" being merely museum-made to distinguish the British water-wagtail's less brilliant plumage from that of its Continental congener, the white wagtail (*alba*). Both sorts are interesting to gipsies, and may possibly connote not a few virtues which the nomads would fain possess. Singing not and perching not in trees, the wagtail's nimbleness is exquisite; you can see it feeding as it runs in a new-ploughed furrow, or next moment perched on a clod with nodding head and wagging tail; now skipping among sheep in the netted fold or tripping in zigzags before the muzzles of feeding cattle; now walking like a warden in the middle of the bare high road, or dabbling and paddling in water like the gipsy children, or catching flies among drifted seaweed on the beach. These are all nomadic habits which form the mainspring of a real gipsy's existence. At courting-time the male bird struts and pirouettes, swaying a graceful tail after the manner of his kind, and, like the gipsy at a fair with well-groomed horse in halter, showing himself off to the best advantage. And, surely, the female wagtail is as coy and coquettish as fortune-telling juvas used to be. We have seen these love-makings conducted with such intensity that the spectator's movements would be completely ignored. But we know of never a single Romany Rye who has been invited to a gipsy wedding.

Although the black-blooded folk are apparently descended from an industrious pariah caste of Hindustan, the Ancients may have classed them with the idle, beggarly lazars. Frank Hindes Groome, the most gifted and far-travelled of British Romany Ryes, who wrote the account of "Gypsies" in the "Encyclopædia Britannica," appears to have made elsewhere a fatal mistake in supporting the theory of such Ancients as Ælianus and Æuridicus Cordus that the water-wagtail was a type of beggary because it was a particularly great wanderer and would not trouble to make a nest of its own. These suppositions do not tally with science and field natural history. The water-wagtail migrates, but not more than the robin or hedge-sparrow, birds from the North being with us all the winter. All these are classed with the home-birds, and they do not wander like some. Groome's "Romano tschiriklo," the winged fetish of all gipsydom, is the same wagtail which appears on the Gypsy Lore Society's badge; but there were other wagtails—"field" as well as "water"—of which the Ancients probably knew nothing, and the "white wagtail" has to serve French, German and Austrian gipsies the same purpose that the "pied" does to nomads on this side of the Channel.

The appositeness of the Gypsy Lore Society's badge may be explained on other grounds probably not considered hitherto. Here our common pied water-wagtail (*Motacilla lugubris*) is

depicted as walking in a characteristic manner, its long, extremely mobile tail tilted at an obtuse angle, almost as if it were wagging from side to side with the pertness of a gipsy who has just done a good "deal" at a horse fair. The divided motto, "Oke Romano Chiriklo!" above and "Dikasa e Kalen" below, means "Behold, a Gypsy Bird! . . . We shall see the Gypsies!" This is Welsh Romain, but it would do for any pure dialect, "kalen" being the accusative plural of "kalo," meaning "black," or dark-skinned people of dark blood. Mr. R. A. Scott Macfie, hon. secretary of the Gypsy Lore Society, told the present writer that he was talking one day to Saiki, daughter of Khalai Heron and Dorilia Boswell, and wife of Eros Heron, when a water-wagtail suddenly appeared on the scene. It at once elicited the remark: "Dere's some 'un, in Scotland I think, dat's thinking verry hard about us." Did we but understand our gipsy better, we should not declare such a remark to be based on imagination. Even I, a gorgio, have surely seen a water-wagtail a hundred and fifty miles away from the nearest gipsy van or tent.

Without some sense of aestheticism we doubt if it would have been possible for the gipsy to make a fetish of the water-wagtail. We must not forget that it is a biped which walks, that it is sprightly, confiding in man and remaining in close touch with humanity at all seasons. The old story that it never had a home of its own is exploded, for on one occasion at least a pair of water-wagtails built and lined their nest inside a gipsy caravan; they went on the "drom" and visited the horse-fair, rearing their young quite unmolested by the gipsy children. No bird takes easier to confinement, but, being insectivorous, the old difficulty how to feed it properly remains. Another pair of wagtails nested in an old tin which had been thrown out of a gipsy tent. Every season attempts are made to discover some outrageously original nesting site, the birds then adapting themselves to the new conditions with a zeal worthy of greater success than is usually attained. One pair built their nest on a ledge beneath a railway waggon in a siding near Crewe, rode with it long journeys and successfully brought forth their brood in triumph. Another nest occurred in the axle of a cart-wheel outside a village wheelwright's shop, another in a large blue bell deposited from its place over an inn door, another among machinery on board a bucket dredger in the Ouse, another in the bow of a Derwent ferry-boat at Cottingham, near York, another among coils of cordage in a Thames boat-house. The gipsies undoubtedly come across this bird's nest in discarded tins and jars, in old walls from which a stone or brick has been dislodged, and other unlikely places; and when they cry "rinkeno chiriklo!" (pretty bird!), it replies with a "chillip, chillip!" as if pleased to be noticed, without flying away in fear. Rarely molested is its nest—a shallow, snug structure, well lined.

Just as cities, towns and villages come into existence beside flowing water of greater or lesser volume, or where good springs are accessible, so there the gipsy-folk encamp. There they eat, drink and are merry; there they wash their pots and pans daily; there they wash their aprons, kerchiefs, household linen and counterpanes on a Sunday. Not only gipsies, but the peasants of France and other countries, kneel in little wood boxes by the side of crystal-clear streams which sparkle past the villages and the waysides to soap, dip and bittle their linen. The water-wagtail's common rustical name is "Peggy

Dishwasher," for it trips along the shallow edges of a stream like some white-aproned girl, and bobs down therein to catch an aquatic fly or grub, worm, snail, or beetle. The gipsy woman thinks of it as a cleanly little householder, and sings after it "rinkeno chiriklo!" In France its near relative is the "lavan-dièrè" (washerwoman) or the "battellessive" (bittle or mallet-like clothes-beater), while the field-wagtail is "bergeronnette" (little shepherd girl).

HARWOOD BRIERLEY.

TWO REMARKABLE BIRDS AT THE ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS.

TWO species of birds of very great interest are now represented at the Zoological Gardens, one of which has not been seen alive in Europe for over forty years. These are the

extraordinary shoe-bill or whale-headed stork, *Baleniceps rex*, from the White Nile, and the Argus pheasant from the Malay Peninsula. The so-called whale-headed stork, which is probably more of a heron than a stork, was first made known to science in 1851, when it was described by the late John Gould. On March 13th, 1860, two living specimens were received at the Gardens, having been brought home by Mr. J. Petherick, Vice-Consul at Khartoum. These birds did not survive very long, and since that date none has come to Europe, although for some years past one has been kept by the Governor-General at



THE SHOE-BILL.

Khartoum and three in the Zoological Gardens at Giza near Cairo. The *Baleniceps* is a rare and somewhat solitary bird, frequenting the swamps bordering the Nile, and its range extends as far south

as Uganda. Its food appears to consist chiefly of small fish and other aquatic animals, though how it manages to capture them with its extraordinary coal-scuttle-like bill is uncertain. The bill carries a large hooked nail at the extremity, and the edges are extremely sharp and possess enormous crushing power, while the bird's colour is pale grey, like that of a heron. The newly-arrived specimen has been presented to the society by the Sirdar, Lieutenant-General Sir Reginald Wingate, and is an extremely valuable addition to the collection.

The Argus pheasant is an inhabitant of the dense jungles of the Laos Mountains, Siam, South Tenasserim, the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra. Although not brilliantly coloured, the male bird is



A MALE ARGUS PHEASANT.

remarkable from the enormous development of the secondary wing-feathers, which are ornamented with beautiful spots, or ocelli, while the two central tail-feathers are very broad and extend to a great length.

The male bird is said to make clearings in the jungle, where, as the nesting-time approaches, he displays his plumage to the females which come to witness the show. This display has been described by those who have witnessed it from birds in captivity, and a wonderful sight it must be. The bird lowers his breast to the ground and erects his huge wings in an arch over his back, forming a complete circle studded with hundreds of ocelli, which

are shaded so as to resemble balls within sockets. At the same time the two long tail-feathers are erected and wave in the air above the circle formed by the wings. Meanwhile the head and neck are placed behind the expanded wings, the bird merely peeping below or between the feathers, or, as has been stated by some observers, the head may be actually thrust through between two of the feathers in order to enable the bird to view the female for whose benefit the display is performed. An adult pair of these splendid pheasants has arrived, and forms part of the collection of Malayan animals presented to the Zoological Society by the Government of the Federated Malay States. D. SETH-SMITH.

LITERATURE.

THREE BOOKS OF THE WEEK.

A Short History of Scotland, by Andrew Lang. (Blackwood.)

A Short History of the Scottish People, by Donald Macmillan. (Hodder and Stoughton.)

Scotland, by Robert S. Rait. (A. and C. Black.)

IT can scarcely be due entirely to coincidence that these three volumes of Scottish history should all come out at the same time. They are modelled on the same plan, addressed in all probability to the same readers, and to a very large extent contain the same information. Two of them are practically identical in title, and though the third is included in a series, the writer takes care to assure us in his preface that his, too, is a short history of Scotland. All this is a great testimonial to the late J. R. Green, whose "Short History of the English People" is the model upon which these volumes are obviously compiled. It requires no great knowledge of history, however, to see how vastly different was his task and that of Mr. Andrew Lang, Dr. Macmillan and Mr. Rait. The history of England differs completely in character from that of Scotland. It seems from the very beginning to have been invested with a purpose. Step by step we see in it civilisation widening its scope. The wars that had to be chronicled either had an immediate object of improvement or improvement followed. The national arrangements, by a happy chance, were such as to promote the growth of freedom and general progress. The king in the earliest times was dependent for his supplies on Parliament, and Parliament coupled the grant with a demand for the redress of grievances, and so the history of England, in the hands of Mr. J. R. Green, became a majestic epic. He possessed a style, too, of singular fitness for his purpose in that short history. It enabled him to generalise as much as he liked and yet to bring in that eloquent touch of detail which lends a peculiar charm and picturesqueness to his pages. The history of Scotland stands on a different basis. It is, to a large extent, a record of unconnected events. There is no general thread running through it, and it might almost be said that whereas England was made great by its history, Scotland never became in itself great, although it developed the conditions that made for greatness among its individual citizens. Thus there is a certain incongruity in adapting Green's English methods to Scotland's case. Mr. Lang, skilled *littérateur* as he is, escapes from the dilemma in his own way. His plan resembles that of Green least of the three, and the title is the strongest point of resemblance. He is content to write the chronicles of his native country and very little inclined to play the part of Greek chorus to his characters. Very little effort is made in his pages to connect one character or one generation with another. What he seems in search of always is the picturesque event or striking character; and, luckily for his readers, Scottish history teems with such material. It is passing strange that a people who are not particularly sentimental, but rather go to the other extreme of hardness, should have produced so much romance and expressed it so beautifully. No other country of Europe has a greater wealth of ballad literature and there is no historical novelist comparable to Sir Walter Scott. We doubt if the annals of any other country in the world yield such a wealth of affecting or heroic incidents. Mr. Andrew Lang is himself a romancer, and is clearly at home in the recital of the old historical Scottish stories.

Dr. Macmillan and Mr. Rait appear to us to have formed a different conception of their task. The Muse of History as they know her wears a more meditative appearance than is possessed by the wilder and wittier inspiration of Mr. Andrew Lang. They are both of them very much intent on pointing the moral and adorning the tale, often when there is no moral to point. Both take a certain pleasure in anticipating what used to be the foundation of belief in the mind of many a reader. Thus Mr. Rait begins his tale with a quotation from "The Antiquary," in which the vagueness of our knowledge of the Picts is ridiculed in the novelist's inimitable manner. Dr. Macmillan goes further.

His first chapter ends with a quotation from Dr. Robert Munro, the well-known anthropologist, in support of his contention that Scotsmen must rest content with being "well-developed mongrels." "Perhaps few anthropologists," says this philosopher, with the dryness of his countrymen, "have ever seriously considered the slender ground on which the term 'Celtic' is applied in modern times to sections of the population in these islands." This is, indeed, a change from the time when Professor Blaikie used to hold that the language of Ossian was that which Adam and Eve spoke in Eden.

Anyone who wishes may test the characteristics of the three historians by considering their treatment of one or two events which stand out conspicuously in Northern history—such as the noble deeds of Wallace and of Bruce, the felicitous reign of David I., the battles of Bannockburn and Flodden, the murders of kings and the murders by kings, the work of John Knox, and the religious history of the people from his time down to that of Robert Burns. We take one, and we find that to Mr. Andrew Lang the battle of Otterburn was only "a great and joyous passage of arms by moonlight"; Dr. Macmillan tells the story of it with great detail; and Mr. Rait describes it as an event in the military history of King Robert's second son, the Earl of Fife. It is no paradox to say that whatever the fray was in reality, it had an enormous effect in moulding Scottish patriotism. Douglas, the "kindly Scot" of the ballad, became as inspiring an example as the other national heroes, Bruce and Wallace. It is in romantic occurrences of this kind that we must seek the influences which helped to make Scotsmen what they are. The greater movements produced little effect on the nation. Compare, for example, the results of the Roman occupation of England and the Roman occupation of Scotland. In one country "the masters of the world" settled and colonised for three hundred years, and left a perceptible impression on the habits, character, law and even the physique of the English nation. The Roman invasion of Scotland resulted as far as we can see in nothing. Two walls were built to keep out the ravening Picts, a few camps have been unearthed, notably the one at Ardoch; but probably the Roman generals looked upon the country as too forbidding for conquest. Mr. Lang draws a striking word-picture of what it must have been. Little except the hills remain as we know them now; the rivers were not confined within their banks; fields on which heavy crops are harvested to-day were then under water. Much of the land was in forest and inhabited by the red deer, elk and wild boar. The riches of Scotland, her minerals and oils, were still in the bowels of the earth, and many hundreds of years were to pass before they were opened up. This is typical of Scottish history. In it we find very few actors who had any but strictly personal aims. Each of the turbulent nobility seemed ever to be snatching at something for himself, and they were the most lawless nobility of Europe. No historian has set down any close description of their social life, probably because it is almost unprintable. We know it from the ballads and songs and from the Rabelaisian amusements described by poets and romancers. Dunbar, perhaps the greatest poet Scotland produced, gives many extraordinary hints of the licence of the Court and courtly circles of the time of James IV., and a certain grossness characterised the Scotch all down the ages. It existed side by side with a stubborn courage and strength of character.

THE BIRDS OF NORTHUMBERLAND.

The Birds of Northumberland and the Eastern Borders, by George Bolam. (Blair, Alnwick.)

MR. BOLAM has the temperament and characteristics of the local naturalist. He is a Northumbrian of Northumbrians, steeped in the lore of that diversified county. Not at all addicted to the practice of making prose-poetry, or even of writing pictorially, he often, nevertheless, brings up the feeling of a landscape in a phrase, as when he says of the ravens, "Their croak is unmistakable and carries far in calm weather, and few sounds harmonise better in the ears of a naturalist with the lonely moorlands or the rugged sea-cliff over which it is most generally heard." He has evidently lived much out of doors in a district of

infinite variety, for he is equally at home watching the shore-birds on Goswick Sands, himself cunningly concealed in a hole covered with sacking, the more to be in harmony with the surroundings; exploring the long "guts" of Holy Island; fishing in Till or Tweed; following up the College and its sister burns; listening to the curlew and peewit as they cry mournfully over the high Cheviot moors; or shooting in the rich plowland and pasture which the valleys offer as a contrast to the bleak hillside. Journals kept over a period of thirty-five years or more supply most of his material; but he has also pored over the records left by his predecessors, of whom a masterly account is given in his introduction. Many of them have enshrined the results of their labours in the Proceedings of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club, an association formed in 1831, which still remains the best of its kind. Among the most widely known ornithologists of the district was Prideaux Selby of Twizel House—the one near Belford, not that on the Till. His name is familiar as a friend and correspondent of Sir Walter Scott, who often stayed at Twizel. Earlier still comes Thomas Bewick, whose "British Birds" was more Northumbrian than he knew. The very life and atmosphere of the county are rendered in his famous tail-pieces. Hancock and the late Canon Tristram, Dr. Hardy and Thomas Gray are among others who have more than a local reputation. Mr. Bolam does not mention Shaw, the self-taught shepherd-artist from the Cheviots, whose astonishingly good drawings of birds of prey used to decorate cottage walls. Mr. Bolam's own book is largely one of recorded observations. His plan is to take the birds one by one, following the nomenclature and arrangement of Howard Saunders in his "Manual of British Birds," and give a local history of each. We were about to write a Northumbrian history, but this would not be strictly accurate, as, although the book is practically Northumbrian, Mr. Bolam's title allows him to take in the adjacent Scottish counties, and particularly the coast-line. His method is not to give a formal description of each bird, but he shows a keen interest in any deviation from the normal, especially as regards colour. Copious accounts are given of various hybrids, or alleged hybrids, and little attempt is made to indicate the natural haunts, except where a specimen is found away from them. Mr. Bolam is more of a sportsman than is the typical field naturalist of to-day, and the record of rare birds shot will startle the humanitarian, who will not share his satisfaction in regard to such facts as that a female peregrine was shot on Berwick Cliffs on November 18th, 1897, and a male on Holy Island the same day. Occasionally a little more precision of statement would have been desirable. Have the black-headed gulls really been at Pallinsburn "time out of mind"? There is a tradition that their appearance dates from the bursting of the lake from which Morebattle, the village by the mere, originally took its name. It was a breeding resort of this gull, which settled at Pallinsburn the year after the old site was destroyed. Such, at least, is the local legend. Mr. Bolam is not often caught napping. He probably knows the birds of Northumberland at least as well as any living man, and his book for many a year will be a useful one for reference. Those who are familiar with the district will prize it for another and different reason. In a natural and still most effective manner it suggests days spent in the invigorating hill air and nights of quiet reading or almost as quiet talk in the secluded houses built among the glens.

A LOGICIAN OF CRICKET.

Batsmanship, by C. B. Fry. (Nash.)

MR. C. B. FRY has written a really magnificent monograph on the technical side of batting. It is the kind of work which, if there were a Royal Society of Cricket as there is a Royal Geographical Society, would gain for its author the gold medal for scientific cricketing research. More than that, such a society would have to strike a special medal, because this book stands alone, and will probably continue to stand alone. It is rather a remarkable fact that the stiff batsman of the earlier nineties, who, by taking thought, transformed himself into the great player of the years round 1900 to the present day, should also possess the power of explaining how the thing was done. He possesses a clear, forcible and thoroughly workmanlike style of writing which stands in an altogether higher class than that of any other scribe of the game who has written since the historian of Halfpenny. Some of the most arresting things in the book are the photographs of preliminary stances right and wrong. Mr. Fry stands beautifully at the wicket. His weight rests just where it should. "What is required in the batsman's initial position at the wicket is, first, that it should be such as to enable him to pass from it with the greatest possible facility into the complex combined action of feet, legs, body and arms, which we call the mechanism of all sorts of strokes; and secondly, that it should be such as enables him to see the ball all the time as fully and fairly as possible. It is no good to see the ball to perfection if one is tied up in a tangle which prevents one making the suitable stroke correctly." So writes the author, and the truth of his observations is struck home by the three photographs to which I have referred. Suppose Mr. Fry went out at Lord's or Southampton and took up one of the positions illustrated as faulty, on pages 63 and 72 of his book. "What's wrong with him? He's lost it," the members in the pavilion would say, and by "it" they would mean his very supreme mastery of the art of batting. Of this art Mr. Fry is so great a master that I have heard an innings of a hundred of his criticised (by a real critic) as not being played in his best form because of a couple of mis-hits, neither of which fell within ten yards of a fieldsmen. Cricketers expect from Mr. Fry a classic exhibition whenever he goes to the wicket. He gives it to them so often that if he drops by a hair's-breadth from the standard he himself sets, his judges condemn him. This is in reality a compliment, although it does not always sound so. But to return to this book. Let us consider for a moment why Mr. Fry has written it. He says himself: "In this little book I shall try to describe what may be called the standard strokes, a mastery of which is essential to an accomplished batsman; and to explain in detail how they ought to be made and how they ought to be used." Such explanation is a matter of extreme difficulty, for each stroke has, so to speak, to be "analysed into its component parts." This is Mr. Fry's view: "Suppose (he writes) you were fortunate enough to meet Mr. R. H. Spooner in a country lane, with no one else in sight, you might persuade him to show you with his walking-stick how he makes his off-drive. You would then see, as well done as may be by any expert of the present day, what we have decided to call the mechanism of the off-drive, pure and simple. But it is not simple at all. It is quite complex. The question is whether you would be able to analyse what you have seen into its component parts. If not, it is very unlikely that even an immediate attempt on your own part to make the same stroke in the same way

would be completely successful. With the picture of what Mr. Spooner had done fresh in your mind, you might indeed reproduce something like the same result; but, a hundred to one, your reproduction would be defective in at least four or five quite essential details; probably in a dozen." This quotation gives, graphically enough, the aim of the book. No cricket library can be complete without it. It is a most remarkable *tour-de-force*—the autobiography of one of the greatest batsmen the game has ever known with the word "I" left out. The Euclid of batsmanship, but whether readable or not, those who have sampled the quotations in this review can judge for themselves. Congratulations, C. B. Fry!

NOVELS OF THE WEEK.

Crowns, by Winifred M. Macnab. (Lynwood.)

"CROWNS" belongs to that light and graceful order of romance with which Mr. Anthony Hope made us familiar some few years ago. Winseigna, a small and somewhat unruly kingdom, has, just before the opening of Miss Macnab's story, lost its ruler by assassination. The people require a strong hand in authority. Unfortunately, this strong hand is not forthcoming, the successor of Otto being, like himself, of too kindly and indolent a disposition to hold his own against disaffection. This fact is known to Humphrey Darrell and Gerald Morne, who were at Eton with the newly-appointed Michael. Darrell comes to Winseigna with the intention of placing himself at the service of Michael, to whom he is cousin. Though heir-presumptive to the throne, Darrell, whose tastes are those of an English country gentleman, has no desire to succeed Michael or supersede him. Crossing to Winseigna he encounters Gerald Morne, and enlists his services for the other man. The pair soon find themselves the centre of exciting events which form the plot of the capital tale Miss Macnab has to tell. There is a considerable amount of intrigue and some bloodshed in it, also some clever character-drawing, in particular in the case of the old country priest, Father Benoit. Miss Macnab has that light touch which makes romance of this kind interesting and readable, and her style is graceful and unforced.

The Serpent's Tooth, by B. M. Croker. (Hutchinson.)

FROM the moment when Colonel Fenchurch's niece becomes a member of the Fenchurch family his wife decides that as quickly as possible a home shall be found for the unwanted third. With this thought in her mind she is not slow to note the effect Letty Glyn has made upon Hugh Blagdon, a man of indifferent character but considerable wealth. Letty is young, pretty, unsophisticated; though possessed of a will of her own, she finds it difficult to set that will up in defiance against that of the older woman; she falls in with the plans made for her. Almost immediately after marriage she realises her mistake. Closer acquaintance with Hugh Blagdon results in a complete disillusionment; she sees but one way open to her, and takes it. That she should hardly have decided upon flight before regret overtakes her counts for nothing in her husband's eyes; she finds herself in the intolerable position of suppliant to a mean nature which she has not wronged. Her punishment exceeds her deserts, and it extends itself from Hugh Blagdon to her child Cara, whose attitude towards her mother is summarised in the hint which the title of the book affords. Mrs. B. M. Croker has a sense of poetic justice, and her novels are generally readable; this one is no exception to an accepted rule.

The Unknown Woman, by Anne Warwick. (Mills and Boon.)

THERE are two heroines in this novel, mother and daughter; each in turn—the author having considerable sympathy with the situation—entertains a liking for Herndon Kent. At the story's opening Sandra has been married to an artist for several years, the episode with Kent is buried, and she has a daughter of a marriageable age, Muffet. Sandra is not happy, husband and wife have for some time gone their different ways, with the result that the woman has hardened and the man accepted the position with characteristic irresponsibility. Complications ensue and mutual recriminations, when Herndon Kent—who has the grace to prefer the daughter to the mother, with the reader's judgment backing him—announces the fact that he has fallen in love with Muffet, a charming and natural young woman for whose sake it is worth while to read the story. Sandra, very much in her element, and strangely lost to all sense of the impossibility of such a union, is shaken from the stoical unimpressionability which is her pose and treats her husband to some hard knocks in discussing with him the position. The artist does not comport himself in a reasonable manner, and the situation threatens to come to a deadlock, with Muffet eating her heart out in youthful despair, when abruptly the matter is simplified by her fleeing from New York to Cannes, with the declared intention of forgetting Herndon Kent. That she succeeds to some purpose may be gathered from the fact that she marries Portland Junior, a youth whose chances at the beginning of the story might, to the inexperienced, have looked remarkably slight. The novel is interesting enough, but melodramatic and rather crude.

The Wax Image, by Kathlyn Rhodes. (Holden and Hardenham.)

MISS RHODES has written a volume of short stories which are all more or less commonplace, but are calculated to while away time without undue tax on the reader's intelligence. Miss Rhodes has a facile fancy, and she is not too critical concerning her manner of telling a story. Again, surely she must be aware that there is a distinction between "lain" and "laid." There is decided ambiguity in the assertion that "for hours he had laid in agony." Miss Rhodes has written one or two interesting novels; the memory of these makes this book, which falls considerably below their standard, the more disappointing.

The Tomboy and Others, by H. B. Marriott Watson. (John Lane.)

"THE TOMBOY AND OTHERS" is a collection of uneventful sketches, in several cases joined to one another by the slightest of links. There is little enough in the book likely to hold the attention, and the impression it leaves is of the faintest. Mr. Marriott Watson seems always to be on the point of "allowing something to happen," while the reader, thirsting for that point to be safely engineered, continues to follow his nimble but rather wearisome proficiency in the art of saying nothing at great length, in the hope that his expectations may yet be justified.

POLO GYMKHANAS.



LADIES' SCURRY RACE.

A WELL-ARRANGED polo gymkhana such as that held by the Vale of White Horse Polo Club—from which our pictures are taken—on Saturday last, provides something more than amusement for the spectators, for the successful ponies must have been well and carefully schooled and trained, and their riders must be possessed of no mean skill in the saddle. The Bending Race, or, rather, the preliminary course of training through which a pony must go before being able to come successfully out

of a competition of the kind, is an absolutely necessary part of a polo pony's education. Without it he cannot "assemble" himself properly, or, to put it more plainly, he does not know how to keep himself so balanced that he may be able to turn in any direction on the slightest hint from the "aids" given by the hand or heel of his rider. The rider, too, in the course of a "bending" school, learns how to apply the "aids," or scientific hints, to his pony at the right time and in the right manner, and, the preparation finished, pony and rider making



APPLE AND BUCKET RACE.

one, will twist and turn in any direction, in and out of any obstacles, seemingly without effort and without a moment's hesitation. But pony and rider must be in unison, or the effect is spoiled. Put a rough and unskilful horseman on a perfectly schooled and broken pony, and the involuntary application on the part of the rider of what the pony takes for "hints" will lead to confusion if not disaster. In the same way the scientific horseman on an unschooled pony will find that for the time being his delicate handling is thrown away and that he will have to fall back upon brute strength and a strong seat in the saddle to secure even a minimum of the desired effect. Musical Chairs is another of the usual gymkhana events in which a well-schooled pony shows to advantage. The game is

to make for a vacant chair the instant the music ceases; the conductor will probably manage to keep the competitors on the *qui vive* by pretending to stop the music, then after several false alarms it does stop, which is the time for the quick-eyed rider to swing his pony round, so balanced that it is at the top of its stride the moment its head is turned in the desired direction, and yet so well in hand that it can stop still in its tracks the instant the rider jumps off to secure the chair. The Threading the Needle competition calls for the exhibition of unusual qualities on the part of the rider, for bitter experience has taught the majority of mankind that the threading of a needle is no light task, especially perhaps when the fingers have had to deal with a hard-mouthed pony. The Apple and Bucket Race, the Sack and Tic Race and Scurries for both gentlemen and ladies are interesting and

offer amusing items in a polo gymkhana, and in these a well-trained pony is more than half the battle.

THE POLO PONY'S COST, KEEP AND CONDITION.

THESE three matters are closely connected, and the last is most important, for without condition no pony can do his best at a hard game. The more I think over the International matches, the more convinced I become, that the victories of the Meadowbrook team were due, apart from the superior flexibility and accuracy of the hitting of the players, to the condition of their ponies. The superiority of their ponies was not so much in the quality of the animals themselves as that they were brought on to the ground in better condition

than those of the English team, and this invaluable quality of condition is not a question of expenditure, but of care in matters of detail and stable management; the cost of keeping a pony is much the same whether its condition is good or bad; indeed, if the pony does not thrive, we may add to the expenses of its keep the deterioration in its value if and when we wish to sell it. A trained polo pony with a character for the game has a fixed value, and this it is likely to bring at any time if it is neither spoiled by bad riding on the ground or bad management in the stable. As to the cost of keeping a pony in London for polo, that must, of course, be considerable. At Hurlingham and Ranelagh there are some four hundred boxes for the use of members' ponies. A guinea a week is the charge at both clubs. There are besides many excellent stables outside, and the keepers of these charge from twenty-five shillings to twenty-seven shillings a-week for each pony. Of

course, the player has to find his own groom. The man who means to play in matches, who belongs to one of the teams under a captain like the Tigers or the Magpies, cannot possibly do with less than three ponies, and in most cases would have four or five. On the other hand, the man who purposes to play only in members' games, or an occasional match, could enjoy a very fair season with two really good ponies in hard condition. Thus we see that from two to four or five guineas a week will suffice for the keep of the ponies for an ordinary player in London. This would not include such items as linseed, which I have always found most valuable for hard-worked polo ponies, boiled to a jelly and given with the Saturday night's mash. The character of the man in charge of polo ponies is most important; everybody who wishes to have his ponies really done justice to should bring his own man. If a groom comes up from the country, his wages should be raised for the time being to the same average as that of men in a similar position

in London, and an additional lodging allowance, which would be at least four shillings a week, given. If we want helpers, there are a certain number of men in the neighbourhood of the London polo clubs who can be engaged as strappers at about one pound a week; but these chance helpers are, as a rule, only useful and trustworthy under a good stud groom. For busy people the stud groom is most important. Polo ponies must necessarily, in a great many cases, be left a great deal to the care of servants, and a really first-rate stud groom is worth all the wages we give him. The stud groom is himself often intelligent, trustworthy and efficient; where many of them fail is that they have not sufficient control over their underlings. A stud groom who knows what work is, how it ought to be done and how to make other people do it is as invaluable as he is rare. The best plan with a large and valuable stud of polo ponies is to hire one's own stables and have one's own man in sole charge, keeping one man to every three ponies, which is quite sufficient.



BENDING RACE.

A good many ponies are all the better for being worked in a sharper bit than they would have on the polo ground, and if a man can be trusted with sharp spurs, these also are an advantage in the early stages of work; but from the moment when the pony is taken up from grass the conditions which make for fitness on the ground should be borne in mind by the owner and the stud groom. Plenty of steady work is good, but equally important are absolute regularity of stable routine, the quality of the food given and a careful study of the quantity. The point I have always found most difficult to impress upon grooms is that each pony has a certain quantity of oats which he can take with advantage; every ounce over that is wasteful and mischievous. If a pony is doing really well on eight or ten pounds a day, it does not follow that he will do better on twelve pounds. In India, when I had ponies in training (and the modern polo pony requires to be trained with as much care as if he were a racehorse) I used to be guided a good deal by the state of their mouths; if these were of a healthy pink colour I was fairly satisfied. As a matter of fact, it will be found in practice

that every pony has a certain amount of corn he can eat to advantage, and it is the business of the stud groom to mark what that amount is, and to see that the pony gets no more. I am firmly convinced that it is better for a polo pony to have rather less than he could digest than more than he is able to use profitably. Next to the quantity the quality must be considered. Personally I do not like any foreign oats, and, of course, new oats are not to be thought of for a moment. Old English oats from thirty-eight to forty-two pounds to the bushel are well worth the extra money we pay for them, and if one must put it in a definite form, it is an advantage to give a smaller quantity of oats of the highest feeding value than a larger quantity of an inferior quality. In each case the amount of nourishment extracted may be the same, but in the second instance the tax on the digestive power is greater, and this is exactly what we wish to avoid in the case of hard-worked ponies. Needless to say, variety of food is invaluable, and almost any green food and carrots may be given to most ponies in small quantities every day, and especially to delicate feeders. X.

ON THE GREEN.

By HORACE HUTCHINSON AND BERNARD DARWIN.

THE SUGGESTED ALTERATIONS OF THE AMATEUR CHAMPIONSHIP.

THE present golfing year is one of petitions. First there was the monster petition for the "standardising" of the ball, as to which the delegates have declared that it is no business of theirs, and, secondly, there has been the petition, which was very largely signed at Westward Ho!, and of which Mr. Angus Hambro was the originator, for the alteration of the conditions under which the amateur championship is played. Put shortly, the proposal is that there should be a qualifying competition by thirty-six holes of score play, and that the survivors (the exact number of the elect is at present doubtful) should play off by match play, each match being over thirty-six holes.

There are one or two difficulties which may be called technical. The competition would take at least a day longer than it does under the present conditions. It may be assumed that two days would be occupied over the qualifying rounds, since a field as large as is nowadays seen in the amateur championship could not, practically speaking, get round the course twice in one day. That being so, not more than sixteen could be allowed to qualify for the match play stages unless the competition is to extend over a week; and it might well be argued that sixteen is not a large enough number to include all those who have a chance of winning. These, however, are questions of detail to be settled by those who approve the scheme and would have the working of it. Personally, I am one of those who did not sign the petition, and who dislike the scheme in its entirety, and my objections, whether sound or not, are of a more root and branch character.

The contention of those who support the alteration is, shortly, this: that the eighteen-hole matches do not constitute a sufficient test, that victory travels too often on the wings of chance, and that the best man does not necessarily win the championship. I am quite willing to agree that the new plan would more inexorably divide the wheat from the chaff, and we should be more certain than we are at present of having the best player, or one of the two or three very best players, as our

amateur champion every year. By admitting so much it may be said that I entirely give away my case, but this I deny. There is such a thing as making a game too inexorable, serious and unpleasant, and I conceive that a system which is certain to produce, at any rate, a very good champion, if not on every occasion the very best of all, and at

the same time gives a great deal of fun to the majority of the players, is not one to be lightly set aside. The championship, as it is, is already a very sufficient test of endurance as well as of golf, and the proposed alterations would make it still more so.

Moreover, even though it may be quite certain that the longer test will, with greater certainty, produce the better player as the winner, there is surely a good deal of nonsense talked about the insufficiency of the eighteen-hole test. To listen to some of the arguments advanced, one would imagine that under the present system good players are nearly always beaten by bad ones, and this through no fault of their own, but simply because of the terrific putts holed by the inferior adversary. But in truth and in fact, how often is one beaten in the championship either by a superior or inferior adversary through this irresistible "fluking" of which so much is heard?

Personally, I have been beaten in a good many championships, generally by my superiors, occasionally, as I have in my vanity imagined, by my inferiors; but I can remember no single one of these contests in which defeat has come through any overwhelming display of partiality for the other side on the part of Providence. What I can remember with painful vividness is the number of times I have been very nervous, or very cross, or very foolish, or sometimes all three together, and the consequent bad shots of my own that have led to my defeat. It sometimes seems to me that those who cry loudest about the insufficient test are also those who are most

frightened of being beaten by less distinguished players than themselves, and allow this self-consciousness to affect their play. Of course, it is horribly unpleasant to find one's self two or three down to someone whom one expected to beat; it is painfully easy to lose all hold on



MR. ANGUS HAMBRO, M.P., LEADER OF THE REVOLUTION.

one's nerves and throw up the sponge. But what I cannot see is that when people behave in this rather despicable manner they deserve any particular sympathy. With another round to come, the superior player would not, perhaps, collapse so easily; he would remain calm through knowing that the enemy had more rope with which to hang himself. But does he deserve any great credit for that? If he had been more of a man, he would have pulled himself together in eighteen holes. It may be worth pointing out that the *News of the World* Tournament, in which, of course, the field is a great deal smaller, resembles the amateur championship, in that the matches, except the final, consist of but eighteen holes. Yet in nine years Braid has won four times, Taylor twice, and Herd, Sherlock and Tom Ball once apiece. Here is no evidence of an insufficient test. The point is that distinguished professionals are far more capable of playing their true game against their inferiors than are some distinguished amateurs.

Under the present system everybody has at least the anticipation of some amusement. We all hope to have at least one good match, which is a pleasure, though a painful one. We may die a glorious and educationally valuable death at the hands of Mr. John Ball, or, if we have a reasonably good draw, we may even penetrate some way through the tournament. At worst we shall have had a little pleasure and much hope, which is in itself an agreeable thing. But are we going to get anything of pleasure out of thirty-six holes toiling with a card and pencil? Most of us would have two days of misery, unrelieved even by hope, only to be thrown out at the end of it. We shall have had no fun whatever for our money—a drab and depressing prospect.

In the presentation of this side of the case there is, I am quite ready to admit, a weakness. Score play is a misery to most of us, partly because we are not good enough players, and partly because our temperaments cannot stand the horrid, long-drawn-out strain of it. This is a weakness too obvious to

deny; the only question is whether it is not like that of Mr. Weller, senior, an amiable one, more amiable, at any rate, than the other that I described. Personally, I think it is, but that may be because I suffer from it more acutely of the two.

That which I plead for is the greatest happiness of the greatest number so far as it is consistent with the championship being won by a good golfer. However many may sign this petition, I find it extraordinarily hard to believe that the rank and file of those who go in for the amateur championship will really enjoy themselves or the meeting half so much as they do now, if they have little to look forward to except thirty-six holes with a card and pencil. They may think they will, but it is my firm conviction that they will do nothing of the sort; having signed in haste, they will repent at leisure. If the present system produced constant and outrageous "flukes," of course the question of more or less good fun would be quite a secondary one; but does it, in fact, produce anything of the kind? The last four years have seen Mr. Ball champion twice, Mr. Hilton and Mr. Maxwell once each. Does anybody pretend to say that there could under any system possibly be worthier champions? Look again at the Irish open amateur championship, which attracts many fine golfers and is played on the same system. Mr. Munn has won three times in succession, and on each occasion he has been beyond all cavil the best player at the meeting.

To sum up these retrograde views of mine, the amateur championship already involves a severe strain on the player, as anyone who has penetrated even a modest distance through the tournament will admit. Is it a good thing to make it perceptibly longer and more severe? Under the present conditions, in addition to all the hard work, the championship provides an extraordinarily enjoyable week. Can a beginning of thirty-six holes score play do anything but diminish the enjoyment of all concerned without any compensating advantage? B. D.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FIGHTING POWERS OF RAVENS AND EAGLES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Unfortunately, my observations of golden eagles have been carried out in a district where ravens are conspicuous by their absence, notwithstanding that the country is eminently suited to them as far as one can judge. For this reason I fear I cannot corroborate the interesting statement which appeared in your last week's issue on the attacking of eagles by ravens. There is no doubt, however, that the near relative of the raven—the grey or hoodie crow—shows his dislike to the eagle in no uncertain manner. Time and again have I seen the "bird of Jove" sailing across a hillside with one or more attendant hoodies in hot pursuit and screeching loudly and repeatedly. The hoodie is, of course, a much less powerful bird than the raven, and does not dare actually to attack the eagle, but contents himself with diving to within a few inches of his enemy and then soaring upward quickly. As far as my observations have gone, the eagle never pays the least attention to the pursuing hoodies, but sails quietly on with a dignity which contrasts strangely with the fierce movements of the pursuers. On ordinary occasions I should say that the raven would be decidedly more than a match for the eagle as regards powers of flight, for the King of Birds when near the ground on a calm day is surprisingly clumsy and, as a matter of fact, when he has indulged too heartily in a repast of dead deer is quite unable to lift himself off the ground. But in a breezy day, or at a high altitude, the raven cannot compare with the eagle, whose powers of flight on such occasions are almost beyond belief. I have personally seen an eagle, flying low over the hillside against a fresh breeze, rise on wings which remained practically motionless the whole time to a height so great that he was invisible to view even with a powerful glass, and I venture to think that no raven could have approached this performance.—SETON GORDON.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Your correspondent "Y." in a very interesting communication in last week's *COUNTRY LIFE* on this subject, states that on a shooting in Skye the golden eagle, in contests with the raven, invariably has the worst of it. This may seem very extraordinary to those who remember the great disparity in size and strength between these two birds, but there is undoubtedly warrant for the statement. The late Mr. Howard Saunders, one of the most careful and reliable ornithologists of his time, says in his well-known "*Handbook of British Birds*," in his chapter on the raven: "In defence of its nest the raven is very bold, attacking even an eagle." I have myself never seen a contest between these two birds, though I have watched both raven and eagle in the same habitat; but I remember years ago in the Highlands of Scotland being told by a keeper, a very close observer of Nature, that the raven was never afraid of its big neighbour, and could always hold its own with the golden eagle. No one can doubt that the eagle, if it chose, could always overpower and slay a raven. One must suppose that the force of character of the latter bird—a quality with which the raven is extremely well endowed—enables it to assume the offensive and drive off the eagle in the quarrels which occasionally take place between them. It is to be remembered, too, that other members of the falconidae allow themselves to be attacked and driven away by comparatively weak assailants. I have more than once seen seagulls mobbing and putting to flight a peregrine falcon on the coast of East Sussex. Small birds will occasionally mob and drive off kestrels. In the same manner owls, when they appear in daylight, are frequently mobbed by small birds, and although vastly superior in force and fighting power, appear to submit with resignation or bewilderment to the indignity. The raven

is a sufficiently formidable bird, but in strength and attacking force it could never hope to vie with the golden eagle, if that magnificent raptorial chose to exert its full powers. An eagle of this species has been known in captivity to kill a large Bedlington terrier and a full-grown otter, the latter, as most of us know, a sufficiently formidable beast. It has been known to kill and carry to its eyrie a full-grown fox, and a Highland fox is a much more redoubtable customer than the degenerate beast of English shires. This eagle will occasionally overpower and destroy the young of the red deer. In Central Asia the golden eagle, captured young and tamed for hawking, was formerly used by the Kirghiz Tartars for flights on the maral, the red deer stag of that region. In these flights the eagles fastened upon the head or neck of the deer, buffeted them with their wings, and so bewildered the animals that the mounted Kirghiz could ride up and kill them. The strength of the eagle, especially the grip of its talons, is enormous. Only a year or two since an Inverness-shire keeper was attacked by one of these birds, which fastened on to his leg, fixing its talons in the man's ankle. With the aid of a retriever dog the bird was overpowered and killed; but two of its talons were so firmly embedded in the ankle that they had to be cut off and thus disengaged. I am inclined to think that in those affairs with ravens, the eagle allows itself to be driven off on sufferance, as it were, without exerting its undoubted powers.—H. A. BRYDEN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—It is quite possible that individual pairs of ravens with nests containing young—they breed very early, as you know—may have "a go" at passing eagles and drive them along for a bit. All my experience of many years in Ross-shire (which is not far removed from Skye), in Kinlochewe and Torridon, seems to point to the fact that ravens and eagles do not interfere with one another in any marked degree. A pair of ravens will mob and worry an eagle which approaches too close to their nest, but, as a rule, they take no notice, and the two species sometimes breed at no great distance from one another in the Ross-shire hills, with only Loch Maree between them, if that. I have seen a pair of peregrines harry a golden eagle which had come too near their ground. They stooped at him one after the other again and again, but he continued his course, little disturbed, simply rolling over in the air on his back at each stoop and presenting his talons to the falcons, which immediately "threw up." I should have thought the eagle was always well able to hold his own against all comers in the British Isles at least, and imagine there must be some other cause contributory to the disappearance of the eagles in this unnamed part of Skye. I used to know Skye well, but have not been there for the last year or two.—W. R. OGILVIE-GRANT.

A MARSH HARRIER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Will you allow me space in your paper to express my admiration for the beautiful photograph of the marsh-harrier published in the issue of June 15th. I think I have never seen a more realistic picture of bird-life than this. As far as one can judge, the old bird portrayed is conveying a mouse or rat to the nest. I was at one time very well acquainted with the marsh-harrier in India, for in a district there where I resided it was one of the commonest birds of prey. My experience with regard to the marsh-harrier's food was that small rodents and lizards formed its staple diet. While out duck or snipe shooting a wounded or dead bird would occasionally be carried off by the marsh-harrier, but a bird approaching anything like its own size I have never seen attacked when in a healthy condition.

These beautiful birds, with owls, on account of their rodent-destroying propensities, would prove useful allies to the farmers if only they were allowed to live, to say nothing of the pleasure it would afford to lovers of wild Nature to see them on the wing. Nowadays, alas! all we hear of the presence of the marsh-harrier in these islands is its obituary notice in the columns of some natural history paper.—J. GORDON DALGLIESH.

COME ABOARD.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The enclosed photograph may be of some interest. It was taken on board the s.s. St. Thomas (Danish West Indian Line). The bird flew on to the deck, about eight months ago, in the English Channel as the ship was outward bound. It was in a very exhausted condition, the weather at the time being rough. It sleeps in the fore-castle, and is a great pet with all the crew. In the early morning, when it makes its first appearance, it flies up on to the bridge and shares part of the watch with the officer on duty. It is bathed every Sunday morning, and struts about looking very proud, as it is a pure white; but by the end of the week it is nearly black, due to the caresses of the stokers, who all love Peter, as they call him. It has never attempted to leave the ship, and is quite fearless, being about all the time in different ports, and showing much curiosity at the loading and unloading of cargo. The only thing that scares it is a strong wind; it carefully remains under cover then, no doubt still remembering its unpleasant experience before he found safety on the St. Thomas.—PHYLLIS GOTTO.

SCARCITY OF THE WRYNECK.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In reference to Archbishop Matthew's letter in your issue of June 22nd, we certainly do not use poisonous insecticides (except weed-killer on paths), and have our usual quantum of wrynecks again this year for the third time, twice in the same hole in a hollow apple tree. It has a movable piece of board where the branch was cut off in addition to the hole they use, and last evening, when we had to remove one dead at the bottom, the other eight youngsters were, over and under, quite regardless of us, saying "We must get to bed," so that we generally have two old (no doubt the same ones or their progeny) and nine young ones every year, and now they seem to be contemplating another brood.—IRENE H. SCANTLEBURY.

THE ALPINE MARMOT (ARCTOMYS MARMOTTA).

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—After visiting the exhibition of the Zoological Photographic Club at Regent's Park, I feel that the art, and it may also be truly termed the sport, of photographing wild animals and birds has reached such a state of perfection that I hesitate to send you a photograph which is not up to that standard. However, I do so with the excuse that in the preface to the above-mentioned society's catalogue of exhibits it is stated that those photographs which have been obtained of wild creatures when absolutely at large in their native haunts and under

on only two occasions was I able to get within camera range. On the first of these occasions I unfortunately had not a suitable camera with me, as I was out climbing and not especially to look for marmots; on the second, however, I was fortunate enough not only to get within close quarters but to obtain a photograph of the marmot in his most characteristic pose, namely, squatting



SANCTUARY.

on his haunches on the top of a rock above his burrow and in the act of "whistling." Marmots are supposed to whistle generally as a warning to their neighbours that there is danger ahead; but I am sure that they whistle for pure pleasure at times, as I have often watched them uttering this strange piping cry when they have certainly been quite ignorant of my presence. The cry is much more like the note of a bird, and in a way resembles the call of a golden plover. It is ludicrous to watch the marmot performing it, as his flanks heave violently, and one expects a violent bark to emanate from his lungs. Nevertheless, the shrill note carries a tremendous distance across these rocky heights. This particular species of marmot (*Arctomys marmotta*) is confined to the Alps, Pyrenees and Carpathians. I believe it is certainly the largest and heaviest of the marmot family, which are a branch of the squirrel tribe. The Siberian marmot is of somewhat similar size, but the North American varieties are distinctly smaller. I regret that the circumstances were against obtaining a better photograph. The picture had to be taken at a quick speed by hand, since I was forced to lie in a most awkward position behind a rock and hold the camera above me. Furthermore, the telephoto combination, giving a magnification of three and a-quarter diameters, was working at about F14, and the direction of the wind compelled me to approach the animal more or less against the full sun. However, these are some of the difficulties which help to make the sport of photographing animals so interesting.—ERIC S. HERVEY.

PEACHICKS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I venture to send you a dead peachick, and to ask if you would be so good as to tell me what was the cause of death? We find it very difficult to rear peachicks. They generally reach the stage of hardy-looking birds of some five or six months old and then pine away. The one I am sending, however, is only a month old. I shall be much obliged if you can tell me whether peafowl require treatment similar to that for turkeys, and what is the best food for them? Peahens do not seem to make very careful mothers, and for that reason is it advisable to keep the hen and her chicks under cover at night and in a hen-run; if so, for what period? Hitherto we have left the peachicks to the mother to roam about, giving them fowl food twice a day. Is there any book dealing with peafowl to which you could kindly refer me?—A. V.

[This bird died of acute pneumonia; the apex of the lung was almost solid. It would be wise to isolate all sickly-looking birds, and to change the runs whenever deaths from pneumonia occur. The keeping of adult peafowl presents no difficulty whatever; they should be fed like ordinary poultry, and if plenty of cover and trees for roosting are available they require no shelter. Peachicks are easily reared if left to the hen's care on a good range where they can find natural food. Some finely-crushed dog biscuit, crumbly mixed game or poultry meal and small corn should also be supplied. The hen sits four weeks, and should on no account be disturbed. If an attempt is made to hatch and rear them under common



WHISTLING FOR PURE PLEASURE.

no "control" are of especial interest and value from a zoological standpoint. When in Switzerland last summer, in the Canton of Graubünden, I spent much of my time in walking up to the heights frequented by the marmots, and having picked out one or two with my glass, I amused myself by stalking them, and when at sufficiently close quarters watching their habits. These animals are exceedingly timid, and although I was often within range of even a shot-gun from them,

ever; they should be fed like ordinary poultry, and if plenty of cover and trees for roosting are available they require no shelter. Peachicks are easily reared if left to the hen's care on a good range where they can find natural food. Some finely-crushed dog biscuit, crumbly mixed game or poultry meal and small corn should also be supplied. The hen sits four weeks, and should on no account be disturbed. If an attempt is made to hatch and rear them under common

hens they should be well looked after when the fowl leaves them, as the peahen stays with her young till they are nearly a year old and as big as she is. Thus kept they should have more generous food than is given to chickens—plenty of hard-boiled egg or cooked meat finely chopped up and mixed with meal and chopped raw onion and lettuce, as well as small grain. The more liberty they have the better, unless there is danger of their getting chilled by running in long, wet grass; vermin also have to be guarded against in localities where these may give trouble.—Ed.]

THE RARE LIZARD ORCHIS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am sending you a photograph, taken by Mr. R. H. Wright, of the rare lizard orchis in the hope that you may reproduce it in your paper. The plant, grown in a garden in Kent, was sixteen and a-half inches in height when photographed.—S.

[The illustration depicts an average-sized specimen of the curious lizard orchis, known botanically as *Orchis hircina*. The flowers, borne in a dense spike, are of a dirty greenish white, with a disagreeable smell, and a very long linear lip. In regard to the distribution of this plant, Bentham and Hooker give it as widely spread over Central and Southern Europe, but everywhere rather scarce, and often only in single specimens, extending into Belgium.

Extremely rare in Britain, and confined to Kent, Surrey and Suffolk. It is a stout-growing species, from one foot to five feet in height, but it is not, as a rule, amenable to cultivation.—Ed.]



A RARE ORCHIS.

or sender. It is described in the latter sense in Gen. xli., 42, and Esther viii., 2. The earliest rings are those found in Egyptian tombs, and the best examples are of gold, very heavy, with the name and titles of the owner deeply sunk in the bezel. Among the Romans the giving of an iron ring was a pledge that the betrothal contract would be fulfilled. About the second century the ladies decided that their rings should be of gold. During its gradual transference from pagan to Christian thought the ring became a token of marriage, and entered into the ritual. In the Roman Catholic Church, and in, I believe, the old diocese of Salisbury, the wedding ring is first put on the thumb, then on the first finger, then on the second and then on the third, typifying the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen. On a monument to Sir Richard Cholmley, dated 1631, in the chancel of St. Mary's Parish Church at Whitby in Yorkshire, are three hands clasped, two of which show rings on the thumbs. According to Mackenzie E. C. Walcott's "Sacred Archaeology" the marriage ring was worn on the thumb in George I.'s time, and it may be seen on that digit in portraits of that much-married king, Henry VIII. It will be noticed that the ring in the photograph carries three small ringlets. Such rings are still worn in Norway.—F. M. SUTCLIFFE.

BULLDOG AND DUCK.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—I enclose two photographs I took of my bulldog, ten months old,



PLAYMATES.

playing with a duck. The duck was not in the least afraid of him, and he was most gentle with it, and would walk along beside it like that for quite a long way.—KATHLEEN D. OGILVIE.

THE GRAMOPHONE AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Referring to my letter on the above subject in your issue of June 22nd, and your editorial footnote, the gramophone record of the nightingales singing I purchased from the Gramophone Company, Limited, 21, City Road, London, E.C., and the distinguishing marks of the record are as follows: "G.C. No. 9439." The record was made by a captive nightingale, the property of Herr Carl Reich Bremen. It was apparently sold quite in the ordinary commercial way, and is a wonderful reproduction. Certainly when placed in the wood it is impossible to tell when the bird is singing or the gramophone itself is operating. Frequently friends of mine have thought it was the gramophone when it was not working, and was really a bird.—S. F. EDGE.

DISEASED PEACH TREES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—A fortnight ago a very good peach tree in my vinery was covered with most promising fruit and looking very prosperous in every way, but for some days now the leaves have been falling in quantities, the peaches have lost all roundness and firmness, and are also dropping off almost as fast as the leaves, while the smaller branches from which the leaves have fallen are turning a yellowish colour and withering up. A young nectarine tree in the same vinery is also becoming affected in the same way, but has no fruit on it to suffer, having been planted a short time only. My gardener has found that an old quince tree and a large lime, both in the garden near the vinery, have the leaves spotted in exactly the same way. I enclose some leaves from peach, nectarine, lime and quince tree.—B. G. M.

[The peach leaves sent by our correspondent are attacked by the shot-hole fungus—*Cercospora circumscissa*. This generally fruits on the pieces of foliage that drop out of the holes, hence all leaves that fall should be gathered up and burned. Then spray the trees with ammoniacal copper carbonate, or potassium sulphide, prepared as follows: Make a thin paste with water and five ounces of copper carbonate, adding three pints of the strongest ammonia (880). This should produce a clear blue solution. Then dilute with water to forty-five gallons. Spray with a fine nozzle, and treat the soil where the leaves have fallen as well as the trees. It may be necessary to repeat the operation in about ten days. We think the other trees must be suffering from drought.—Ed.]



A RING OF RINGLETS.

A GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—An English friend recently told me of seeing a communication to you, published several weeks ago, concerning a horse which lived to the remarkable age of thirty-eight years. My friend was not sure about the age, but believed it to be thirty-eight. In this connection it may be of interest to you to know that my family had in its possession in the United States a horse which was forty-two years old when it died. Charlie was bought by my father in the second year of the Civil War (1862) to be used as a charger. The horse was at that time about eight years old. This was the statement of the dealer, and was verified by my father, who was an officer in the United States Cavalry, and also by the regimental veterinary surgeon. Charlie served my father as a mount throughout the four years of the war, carrying him, among other trying campaigns, through the winter of 1863, when the army of the Border was fighting the "guerillas." After the war, Charlie was kept on my grandfather's place and given light work, such as drawing a light waggon to remove dead leaves, or hauling easy loads from the railway station. We looked upon him then, at the age of twelve (also having been four years "in the Service"), as a kind of pensioner to be kept "for auld lang syne." Year after year went by and the horse jogged up and down the lane from the stable to the gate, and, like the laws of the Medes and Persians, he changed not. At thirty his coat was glossy. At forty his old negro groom left the door of his box open one day, and returned to see Charlie sailing over a two and a-half feet fence and galloping through the pet pansy garden of our neighbour, a peppery old retired magistrate. What the retired magistrate, who was standing near, had to say about it was not particularly judicial, but was forceful. I attribute the horse's longevity partly to his negro groom, "Old Josh," who had been my father's servant during the war. Man and horse came to us about the same time and died within a few weeks of each other. The gigantic, white-woolled negro ex-soldier would let no one else take care of "ma hoss." He tolerated my grandfather when he had a suggestion to offer about Charlie; he looked with open suspicion upon my father and flatly rebelled against me. "Young boss, don' you tech dat Charlie hoss" was an order to me in those days. "Old Josh" kept the musket he carried in the Civil War, and would sometimes go through old-fashioned drills in the stable. They all invariably ended with a yell, "Prepar tu receive cav'ry!" and a further deep-chested shout of "Come on, come on if yu dare!" Man and horse left us one month of June, and we lost two things to be prized in this world—a faithful old servant and a faithful old horse.—JAMES OLIVER LAING, Consul of the United States of America, Malta.

THE GARDENS OF THE FORUM AT ROME.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The wonderful discoveries which have taken place during the last few years in Rome have now allowed the general public to grasp an almost perfect idea of what must have been the life of our ancestors of over two thousand years ago. The love of the Romans for their gardens often recurs in Virgil and Horace, the poets of antiquity, as well as in Pliny, the naturalist, and in Juvenal. In a recent visit which I paid to Ostia, the pleasure city of the Roman epoch, I noticed that with every house of the place a garden or a roof-garden has occupied a considerable space, just as in England to-day. No doubt, then, the magnificent "villas" of the Palatine and the Forum—the residence of the Emperors and their Court—must have contained the finest garden plants available in those days, together with a large selection of those plants which, for some reasons not fully known to us, were believed to have religious power. It was with the object of reviving a part of this beautiful Roman flora that Commendator Boni has been working for the last two years collecting a large number of plants chosen among those which are supposed to have grown in the very place where the most important monuments have been discovered. This unusually difficult work has necessitated



IN A ROMAN GARDEN.

extensive study, together with an uncommon technical and botanical knowledge, and has now been almost completed, and the visitor can find among the marbles and the stones left to us through the centuries some fine specimens of the plants which were in existence in Roman times. The acanthus, whose beautiful leaves have inspired the design of the Corinthian capital, is fully represented in this "botanical garden of antiquity"; the white jasmine, which, according to the legend, was sacred to the Vestal Virgins, is now climbing again on the beautiful porch which had been erected under the kingdom of Trajanus "aere senatus populusque romani" ("with the money of the Senate and of the people of Rome"). The large and mysterious basins found near the House of the Vestals, which probably were used as a bath by the Maiden of the Sacred Fire, have now had their borders fully covered by velvet scarlet roses, while the white roses, a symbol of virginal purity, are now blooming around the statues of the "Vestales Maximae," the women priests of antiquity. White and red roses are also decorating the statue of Vettius Agonius Prætextatus, one of the last Prefects or Mayors of Rome, who, having been one of the most strenuous defenders of the dying paganism, had a marble statue erected by order of the religious authority of the time. Two beautiful laurels, a symbol of glory and of eternity, are now decorating the ruins of the "Regia," or residence of the Supreme Pontiff (Pontifex Maximus), to whom was entrusted the highest religious authority of the Empire. Laurels had been in existence at the "Regia" for over nine centuries. Finally, the Forum has been endowed with a magnificent fig tree representing the famous Ficus ruminalis which sheltered Romulus, the founder of Rome, while he was nourished by a she-wolf. The Ficus ruminalis was sacred to the Romans, and it was the usual place where meetings were held to discuss politics or wars. A resolution taken in the vicinity of the Ficus ruminalis was as sacred as a law, and it was considered a bad omen to the Empire if the plant had suffered through drought or other causes. This superstition was so spread among the people that it was necessary to substitute a new plant at night-time with the strictest secrecy whenever the old one seemed to be at the end of its existence, in order to prevent the outbreak of disorders or revolutions. After a lapse of almost fifteen centuries the Ficus ruminalis is again sheltering the place where the Lapis niger, supposed to mark the grave of Romulus, was discovered a few years ago.—M. PETTINATI.

"AND IS THERE ANY MORAL SHUT
WITHIN THE BOSOM OF THE ROSE?"